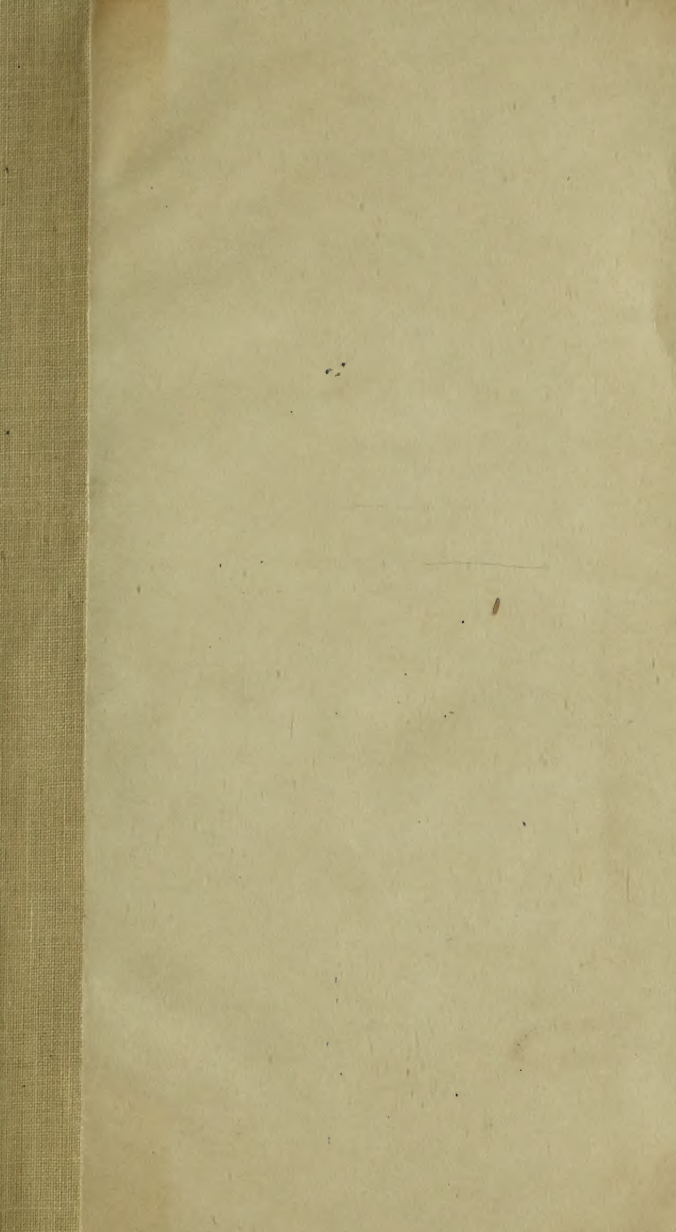


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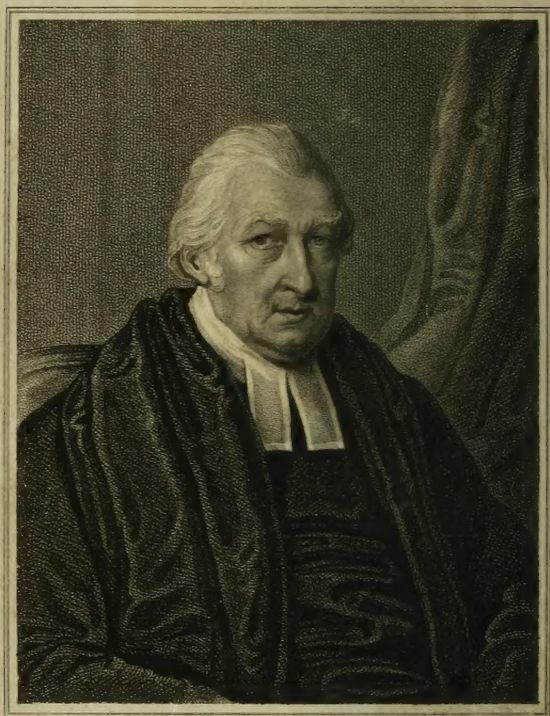
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*Derby del<sup>d</sup>*

*Froom sculps*

REV<sup>d</sup> ROWLAND HILL, M.A.

*London Published by Thomas Tegg III, Chancery Lane, Sept 1823.*

# VILLAGE DIALOGUES,

BETWEEN  
FARMER LITTLEWORTH, THOMAS NEWMAN, REV. MR. LOVEGOOD,  
AND OTHERS.

BY  
REV. ROWLAND HILL, A.M.



*Thomas.* See, Master, what a deal of weeds and rubbish we have got together within these few days; and when we have got them all on a heap, we shall burn them out of the way. May the Lord do the same in all our hearts! DIALOGUE I.

TWENTY-FOURTH EDITION,  
WITH  
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With Twenty-six vignettes.

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## PREFACE

TO THE READER.

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CONTRARY to the accustomed rule of most authors, no Preface or Introduction has been hitherto thought of by way of recommending these Dialogues to the public notice; they have been entirely left to speak for themselves: and the public attention has been attracted by them, far beyond my expectation. As we grow old, it is fit we should grow modest. This seventh edition therefore appears more according to the accustomed form, and modestly asks for a further hearing, especially as it is to be hoped, that some alterations, and many additions will be found as amendments to the work.

The last impression was rendered so tardy in its circulation, by an unfortunate sale of the copy-right, that by many, it was deemed to be out of print, so that the present impression will appear like a life from the dead.

I am happy to be informed by the respectable Bookseller, who now possesses the copy-right, that the price, and manner of publishing the present edition, will render it an easy purchase to the public; and in this I trust I shall have my reward.

For though, as to myself, I neither have, nor wish to have any pecuniary advantage in the sale of the present edition; yet, having been informed that many of my readers have perused these little dramatic attempts, I trust to their eternal good, I have only to express my thanks to the publisher, and to pray for the continuation of the divine blessing on the publication.

Nor can a stronger argument be wished for, by way of encouragement for the revival of the work, with all its defects, whether real or supposed, than its former utility to the souls of men.

Were it however, in my power to render the publication still more complete, after all my efforts, I should be happy to accomplish it; though I find I should have a task before me which wiser heads than mine would be ill able to perform; for to please such a variety of critics, and so dissonant in their views on the same subject, would be a task indeed!

One set of them admires at least my humble attempt to fix an appropriate name to the different characters, before they are dressed, that it may be known what is to be expected from each of them, like the running title of a book. Others, not well versed in drama, tell me, that nothing should be discovered by name, because the character is anticipated before it should. Now it shall be supposed,

that all these are discontinued, and the mere unsentimental names of Brown, Johnson, Jones, Wilson, &c. had been substituted, would such a cold conceit have gratified or displeased?

Some have told me, that all ridicule is inconsistent with the temper and spirit which Christianity should inspire. Others have determined, that it is utterly impossible to be too severe, where folly and wickedness are to be exposed; especially where the dramatic dress covers all such attacks from the charge of personal abuse. Some have supposed, that every attempt of pleasantry or wit, are utterly unallowable on a subject which in itself is so solemn and grave. Others have said, that such sallies of fancy, if innocent and within correct bounds, recreate the mind, engage the attention, and cannot be productive of any bad influence whatever; and that the graver language of Scripture, written under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Spirit, (though even there, such in-



stances are not wanting,) needs not to be the standard to regulate what we write for the instruction of each other. And again; some have supposed, that where a bad minister or character has been held forth as a proper example for reproof; it was meant as a *sweeping* charge, without any discrimination. Others have thought, that if I have lashed characters who are bad, equal respect has been shewn, and in the same line, to those who are good; and if these different contrasted characters are not so *regularly* kept up, as might have been deemed requisite in the judgment of some; yet they conceive the *quantum* of good represented to be in existence, is quite equal to that which circumstances will allow us to suppose, from the depraved state of the world, through the wickedness of the human heart. Still in some instances I am satisfied, I have been favored with hints that will improve the work; and these shall be thankfully adopted: and if they appear not so numerous as might have been expected, I conceive I have sufficient apology for this my tenacity

to my own opinion, and that for the following reason.

I never appear in print, without consulting those who have better brains than myself. It may not therefore be amiss, to inform the reader, that previous to these Dialogues being presented before the public, most of them passed under the eye of the late invaluable Mr. Ambrose Serle; who kindly took upon him the office to be *the final editor of the press.*

Under the sanction of such a name, and of one whose publications are deservedly in such high repute, I have as I conceive, but little to fear.

If therefore the amendments are but few, the enlargements are more considerable: on these I have attempted with the more caution, as my highly respected corrector is no more with us.

One set of critics, however, I shall entirely disregard ; and as in no one instance have I shewn any favor towards them, so shall I expect none in return. I mean the bigot of every party. And while they are so ignorant of their own spirit, as to sanction their sectarian principles, by masking its evils under the mild appellations of order, regularity, consistency, principle, discipline, steadiness, &c. it would be in vain, were I so inclined, to attack them in return. But into a controversy with them, I forbear to enter, who make the sacrament the exclusive criterion of the sect to which they belong ; so contrary to the mind of Christ, and to the nature of that ordinance, in which all his living members are so solemnly directed to look upon themselves as one in him.

This controversy however, has been so ably discussed in a late masterly publication by Dr. Mason, of New York,\* that one would almost conclude, all such minor con-

\* Reprinted by Gale and Fenner.

siderations would dissuade from a spirit of schism and division, so contrary to those lovely uniting tempers, which by the influences of the gospel, are brought home to the heart. Long live the author of such an excellent publication, but longer still, the publication itself.

R. H.

*Surry Chapel, March, 1817.*



# VILLAGE DIALOGUES.

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## DIALOGUE I.

COTTAGE PIETY ; OR THE GOOD ORDER OF THOMAS  
NEWMAN'S FAMILY.

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FARMER LITTLEWORTH AND THOMAS NEWMAN

*The Farmer goes after his Labourers, and finds  
Thomas at his Work, singing.*

*Far.* **W**ELL Thomas, you seem very merry :  
what are you singing ?

*Tho.* Why Master, I am singing one of the Songs  
of Sion.

*Far.* What sort of songs can they be---I never  
heard of such before ?

*Tho.* More's-the pity Master. But I am singing  
his praises who hath redeemed me by his blood ;  
sanctified me by his Spirit ; and leads me to his glory.  
And while I am singing I am cheerful, and then I can  
work the better. Besides, these good songs keep bad  
thoughts out of my heart ; and you know Master, bad  
thoughts are bad things, and bring about bad actions.

*Far.* Why Thomas, I wonder how you can be so  
merry in these hard times.

*Tho.* Hard Master! Why we never mind hard times while we can but live with a joyful hope of a happy eternity; we need "be careful for nothing, while with prayer and thanksgiving we can make our requests known unto God."

*Far.* I am sure my wife and I have care enough; what between my son, who is gone to sea, and my three daughters whom I never can keep at home, unless they have twenty gossips and fine misses with them, though I confess I have a *main* good farm, and a pretty bit of freehold of my own, yet it almost all goes as fast as it comes in.

*Tho.* O Master! you want a proper housekeeper.

*Far.* Nay Thomas, you should not say so, for my Dame is as good a housekeeper as any in the Parish, if my children did not turn out so *untowardly*.

*Tho.* The Housekeeper I mean, is Mr. Godlyfear; and I trust, by the blessing of God, I know the worth of that gentleman very well. He has lived in my house ever since Mr. Lovegood first came to be Vicar of our Parish; and Mr. Godlyfear charges nothing for his wages; though he provides us with more bread and cheese, in these hard times, than ever we had when times were better. And Master, if so be I may be plain with you, had you and Mistress the same housekeeper, he might have kept your Son from running into wickedness, and then he need not have gone to sea; and he would have made your Daughters keep at home and mind the business of the house. I beg your pardon Master, if I say too much.

*Far.* Ah Thomas! I have many a heart breaking thought about that boy. But I must confess you are not the worse for hearing your *Parson*. He has made you a better man than when you came home half drunk with me from Mapleton fair.

*Tho.* A thousand, and a thousand times I have thought, that we were worse than the hogs we went to sell.

*Far.* Ah Thomas! that was partly my fault. But

I thought as the hogs went off so well, we might have a cup or two of drink extraordinary.

*Tho.* But Master, if you think I am the better for hearing our Minister, why won't you come and hear him too? .

*Far.* Why if I did, I should be *jeer'd* at all the market over. You know Thomas, your Cottage is not in our Parish; and what would our Rector say, if I were to leave our Church to hear Mr. Lovegood? for you know he hates him *mortally*; calls him all sorts of names; and says he is a '*Thusist*'; but what he means by it I cannot tell: and I should have as good a peal about my ears from my wife and daughters, as ever I should have from the Parson.

*Tho.* What of all that Master, if you could but get good to your soul; for there is no good like it.

*Far.* Ah Thomas! this is fine talk, for if I were to quarrel with our Parson, I should never have any peace in the Parish, and he would raise my tythes directly, for he is always after more money.

*Tho.* Why since I have been blessed with the fear of God, I have been kept from the fear of man; and it has been a thousand times better with me ever since. Now I am a poor man, and had need fear every body, and you have a good farm and need fear nobody. If Mr. Godlyfear had lived in your house, he would have kept from you far enough such fears as these.

*Far.* I confess, at times I should be glad of such a guest, for he seems to have kept your house very well.---How many children have you? I think the last time I was in your house I counted five.

*Tho.* Thank God, Master, I have six, and another a-coming.

*Far.* Why how do you provide for them all?

*Tho.* By prayer and patience.

*Far.* Is that all? I am sure you must have something better than that.

*Tho.* Better Master! I am directed to pray for my daily bread, and wait with patience till it comes; and the Lord is as good as his promise; for if we

"seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these things shall be added unto us." If I am poor, and a little pinched at one time, I have plenty at another. To be sure it was to *admiration* what a sight of things were sent us, when my wife the fourth time she lay in, was brought-to-bed of twins. Just as we began to mistrust what we should do, when the children came so fast, in came Madam Trusty, 'Squire Worthy's housekeeper, with such a nice bundle of baby-linen, and other things for my wife, that she and the children were soon dressed like *gentlefolk*; and, I am told, the Miss Worthys made these nice clothes with their own hands. Then two days afterwards, two of the young ladies came themselves to our cottage, and gave my wife half-a-crown a piece; and the same day, Mrs. Traffick of the shop, sent her such a large pitcher full of nice smoking-hot caudle,---it would have done your heart good only to have smelt it; and said, that when the pitcher was empty, we were to send it back, and she would fill it again. Our dear Minister also went about, and got us money enough to buy coals to serve us all the winter; and at the christening, he gave us five shillings to help us on: so that I was never better off in all my life; for the faster the children came, the better we were provided for. I will promise you Master, we had enough and enough to do to praise God for his mercies on these occasions. And though I say it, that should not, our poor children look as decent and as healthy as any children in our Parish, or the next to it.

*Far.* Well Thomas, you had need *mind your hits*, to breed them all up.

*Tho.* Why Master, you know the old proverb, "God helps them who help themselves:" for first, I always put the children to work as soon as they are able: they either spin or knit; and my second son Billy has got a loom, which our worthy 'Squire gave him; and he weaves very tidily, and my wife always keeps us well mended; she can put on many a patch,



but she will never let us appear ragged : but then Master, we get all this by living in the fear of God, and that is one of the greatest blessings a man's heart can enjoy.

*Far.* Well I must say, Thomas, you live so orderly, that I should be glad to hear a little about your way of living.

*Tho.* Why Master, it would look so much like bragging and boasting, were I to tell you about our poor way of serving God in our Cottage, since he has changed my heart, that I should be quite ashamed of myself.

*Far.* Nay but I must hear it, that I may tell it to my wife and daughters ; perhaps they may mend their ways, if I tell them of yours.

*Tho.* Well Master, if Madam Littleworth and your daughters can get any good by it, and as you press me to it, I will tell you how we live, both on week days and on Sundays. When I am called to labor, as soon as my wife and I are out of bed, I kneel down and go to prayer, by the bed-side ; then I go to work. She dresses the children, and sets the house in order. When I come home to breakfast, the milk porridge, or what my wife can get for us, is all ready ; we never have any tea but on Sundays, for it will not do for a hard working family, and many of our neighbours call it *scandal-broth*.

*Far.* Ah Thomas ! I fear you are right there, for when my wife and daughters have their gossips, and our little Sam the plough-boy, puts on his livery, that we may look like *gentlefolk*, I hear nothing else. But what comes next ?

*Tho.* Why next Master, I make my eldest boy ask a blessing, and then the victuals and drink go down with a blessing. Then the children say a hymn or some other good lesson out of the books that our Minister gives us. And then one of the other children returns thanks. After that my wife takes down the Bible, and reads a chapter, for Betty reads *bravely*, and I go to prayer : then I go to work, and as you

know Master, take my eldest son, Thomas, with me, and he helps me wonderfully; and I do think I can do almost double the work since I have had him with me. And as you say your daughters and their gossips spend the money so fast, we'll be contented to work the harder. I love to work hard for a good Master.

*Far.* Well Thomas, I shall have no objection against raising your son's wages, for he is a good lad.

*Tho.* Thank you kindly Master, for the times are a little sharp, and my son is a growing, hungry boy.— But I will tell you what we do next, I come home to dinner. Now you know Master, as we have a bit of a garden, which I dig up at odd times, and we keep a pig, which we kill for the winter; what between the pickings out of the garden, the acorns which the children pick up out of the 'Squire's park, and a little barley meal, it does not cost us much to keep it; so that we can get a slice of bacon, and that relishes the potatoes and garden-stuff; and I really think we are as thankful for that, as many a lord is for twenty times as much. Then I make one of the children read a bit of the Pilgrim's Progress, or some other good book, that Mr. Lovegood gives or lends us, and then I go to my work; and Master, if you please, I'll tell you the thanksgiving hymn I sing, as I walk along.

*Far.* Well Thomas, let us hear it, for I am told you could sing as merry a song as any of us, before Mr. Lovegood came into your parish.

*Tho.* Ah Master! that was before the Lord changed my wicked heart; then I could make merry in sin, but now "he hath put a new song into my mouth, even a song of thanksgiving unto my God:" and if you chuse to hear it, this is my song:

MY heart and my tongue shall unite in the praise  
Of Jesus my Saviour, for mercy and grace;  
He purchas'd my pardon by shedding his blood,  
And bids me inherit the peace of my God.

My lot may be lowly, my parentage mean,  
 Yet born of my God, there are glories unseen;  
 Surpassing all joys among sinners on earth,  
 Prepared for souls of a heavenly birth.

Redeem'd from a thousand allurements to sin,  
 I find in my cottage a heaven within:  
 And soon shall I lay all my poverty by,  
 Then mansions of glory for ever enjoy.

By the sweat of my brow, while I labor for bread,  
 Yet, guarded by him not an evil I dread;  
 And while I'm possess'd of all riches in thee,  
 My poverty comes with a blessing to me.

My laboring dress I shall soon lay aside,  
 For a robe bright and splendid, a dress for a bride;  
 A bride that is married to Jesus, the Lamb,  
 Shall shine in a robe that is ever the same.

If my laboring body goes weary to rest,  
 Yet sav'd by the mercy of Jesus, I'm bless'd;  
 Fresh strength for my labor on earth he bestows,  
 And above I shall bask in eternal repose.

*Far.* I confess Thomas, you sing better sort of songs than we sing at our Christmas merry makings; but where did you get it from?

*Tho.* It was our dear Minister that made it for me, and brought it one morning while I was at work. He is such a dear good man, as makes me love the very ground he treads upon.

*Far.* Why I must say your Parson teaches you better songs than our Parson is apt to sing: when he comes to our house he is main fond of singing in his way, "O! the roast beef of old England, and O the old English roast beef:" and what a roaring voice for sure he has; but let us hear how you end the day.

*Tho.* After my work, I return home---Down I sit, and all my children come round me. I confess Master, I am a little too fond of the twins, they are a pair of brave children.---So I put one on one knee, and the other on the other; then I give them all a kiss, and my hearty blessing; for I love them dearly, and could work my skin to the bones to support them. Next I ask them what work they have done

how they have behaved to their mother and to each other: then I make the oldest of them read out of some good book, and I tell them what it means, and instruct them as well as I am able. Next we have a bit of supper, as the times afford; and afterwards my wife reaches down the Bible, and reads a chapter; then we sing an evening, or some other good hymn, and I go to prayer, after my poor fashion, and then our bed feels sweet to us; for, the Lord be praised! we have nothing to fear; Poverty keeps the door from thieves, and a peaceable mind soon sets us all asleep.

*Far.* You have told how you live: I confess I should be ashamed to tell you how we live; but Thomas, I do not pretend to be a *Saint*; yet the house would be all in an uproar if I were to call my family to *say their prayers*, as often as you do.

*Tho.* Many and many a man may *say prayers*, and never *pray*.

*Far.* Aye true, Thomas! and so I thought when Mr. Dolittle, our Rector, came to our house, while our daughter Polly was likely to die of a brain fever. I thought it was shocking when he came to *say his prayers to her*, that the man who could come with Madam Dolittle and his children to our house two or three times a year, to supper and cards, (what games and rackets we used to have!) and now he was to *say his prayers*, which I am sure he would not have done, if Polly had not been sick; but oh! how it shocked me to hear her ask, for she was out of her mind, after he had done, *if they might not have a game at whist?* Thomas, I think I must have your Parson with me when I die, if I do not like him so well as I should while I live.

*Tho.* But Master, if I may be so bold, what came of it when Miss Polly recovered? If you sent for Mr. Dolittle to pray with her, when she was sick; did you not send for him when she got better to return thanks?

*Far.* Oh no! we forgot all that; but the Parson

sent a card, as my daughters call it, to tell them, that he and his family would come and see them upon Polly's recovery; and such a piece of work there was to make out a proper card in return! how they should word it, and how they should spell it---I confess I have made a sad mess of it,---for my daughters having been bred up in a farmer's house, and then sent to a boarding school, they are neither farmers' daughters, nor *gentlefolk*; but, however, religion was never thought of then.

*Tho.* Well Master, I must not find fault with your parson; and I think you cannot find fault with mine; but by your desire, I am next to tell you how we spend the Sunday.

*Far.* Why every day seems to be a Sunday with you, but as you do not then go to work.

*Tho.* But Master, 'we have something better still on the Sunday.

*Far.* [Taking out his watch.] I cannot walk very fast, and I must not stop much longer, as it is almost dinner time; but I should like to hear how you spend your Sundays.

*Tho.* But Master, before you go home, I should be glad if you would walk with me over the next stile, and you will see what a rare plat of ground I and my boy shall make by clearing away that *rubbishy* hedge, and it was of no use, as a fence, before.

*Far.* Well Thomas, let us walk together, and then you shall tell me how you spend your Sundays.

[They both walk over the stile.]

*Tho.* See Master, what a deal of weeds and rubbish, we have got together within these few days; and there is a deal more of it yet to be grubbed up. All this puts me in mind of the natural heart of man, that there can be nothing done in it till the weeds and filth of sin are got out of it. And sin has taken deeper root in our hearts, than these briars and weeds have in this ground; and when we have got them all on a heap, we shall burn them out of the way. May the Lord do the same in all our hearts!



*Far.* Why Thomas, I think Mr. Lovegood will quite make a *Parson* of you soon.

*Tho.* Thank the Lord for his mercy! I hope he has made a Christian of me; and that is all I want, till, through the Lord's mercy, I get safe to heaven.

*Far.* Why I begin to think your's is a good sort of religion. I wish mine was as good as your's, and then I am sure I should be a much better man; but it was the religion I was brought up in, and I should not like to change it in a hurry: though to be sure, your religion has made a *main* difference in your way of living; and so I thought when I went to our parish meeting on Wednesday last, for there came in Dick Heedless for relief, because his wife was brought to-bed, and though he had but two children before, he declared they were all starving. So I thought I would go and see; and to be sure such ragged children, such a dirty house and bed; such broken windows, and heaps of filth in every corner, I never saw before in all my *born days*. So I told the vestry, that he had better wages than you, as I always gave him task work, otherwise he would not work at all; and he is a strong hearty fellow, and can do a deal of work if he likes it: And when I told him to come to your house, and you would put him in a better way of living, he swore a great oath, and said he would never be of your religion, for he was not bred up to *your way of thinking*.

*Tho.* Ah! when poor laboring men must run away to every idle wake, horse-race, boxing-match, and cock-fight, no wonder that there is nothing left for the family. I am very glad 'Squire Worthy is determined to put them all down in our Parish, for our Minister preached a *trimming* sermon against them all; and the 'Squire thanked him for it in the Church-yard, before all the people, and promised him there should be no such doings in that Parish. I promise you, Master, we never were so well off before; what between the Minister and the 'Squire, there is not half the wickedness in our Parish that there was a few years ago.



*Far.* There are not many such 'Squires as 'Squire Worthy in our parts, to be sure he is a *main* good sort of a gentleman.

*Tho.* The Lord send more of them Master! for it is wonderful the good our 'Squire does in setting such a good example. Hail, rain, or shine, let who will be away from Church, the 'Squire and his worthy family are sure to be there. It does my heart good to see them all come in; especially, when I consider, how many poor people are relieved by them: and it is wonderful, how he takes to our Minister, and says all manner of good of him wherever he goes.

*Far.* But Thomas, I hear from my wife and daughters, how *desperately* 'Squire Bluster of Revel-Hall, has quarrelled with your 'Squire, because he has turned out so religious; and how Madam Bluster will not even speak to Madam Worthy, because when they went to see them, instead of having cards after tea, they had Mr. Lovegood there to *preach* and *say prayers* to them, and after that they sung psalms.

*Tho.* Why Master, was there any harm in that? for when the wind sets that way, I hear the bell ring for family prayers every night and morning; and when Mr. Lovegood is not there, it is *to admiration* how the 'Squire himself can exhort and go to prayer with his family. And there is no gentleman's family, far and wide, so wonderfully well ordered as 'Squire Worthy's; you never hear of any of his servants revelling and rioting about the country, like the servants of 'Squire Bluster; and no wonder at it, for wherever the fear of God comes into any one's house, whether gentle or simple, it is sure to drive out the works of the Devil.

*Far.* Ah Thomas, that is all very true: but then you know, there are none of the Ministers round the country come to see your Parson, on account of his religion.

*Tho.* Well, that is an odd story, if religion keeps other Parsons away from Mr. Lovegood; but this is

a mistake, Master, for there is Mr. Meek and Mr. Godlyman, and other good Ministers besides, who come to see our Minister; and then we are sure to hear the bells calling us all to a sermon in the Church after we have done our labor. I love to hear the sound of our Church bells to my heart, for whenever they ring we are sure some good is going forward.

*Far.* Why I have heard it said you have a deal to do about your religion on a week day; but we in our way never think about our religion but on a Sunday, and that is soon over with us, for ours is no *spoil pudding parson*, and then we leave it all aside till Sunday comes round again. But Thomas, you must remember your promise, and tell us how you live on the Sunday.

*Tho.* Well then Master, you must know, my wife always contrives on the Saturday to get our clean linen ready for us, and somewhat a little more decent than our common working dress, to go to Church in on a Sunday; the house is always done up quite neat and clean, and all our clothes got ready against the Sunday morning: Then we get ourselves ready, and begin the Sabbath with a chapter out of the Bible, a hymn, or psalm, and a prayer; then we all eat our breakfast, and afterward send the four eldest of our children to the Sunday school, which our Minister and 'Squire Worthy have lately set up; after this we all go to Church, if we can, unless my wife is obliged to stay at home to nurse the little ones, and then we take it by turns; and I must confess Master, I sometimes feel a little proud to see such a nice young growing family, and how neat and decent my wife makes us all look, and how orderly my children behave.

*Far.* Why to be sure, Thomas, your wife is a wonderful notable woman.

*Tho.* Why Master, every body in the parish admires our Betty, and she is so loving, and good, and kind, I would not part with her for the best Duchess in the land. Well, and after Church we all come home, then I ask the children one by one where the text was, and what they can remember of the Minister's sermon,

and talk with them of the good things we have been hearing. After we have had such a dinner as the mercy of God provides for us, and it is always better than we deserve, then we have another prayer; then the children go again to the Sunday School, and we all meet again at Church in the afternoon; and I think it would do your heart good to hear what pains our dear Minister takes with us; how nicely he expounds the chapters, and how he tries from the pulpit to make known to us the way of salvation. Whenever he tells us of our evil ways, and evil nature, he seems to pity us to the very heart; and tears, again and again, have I seen drop down his dear cheeks, while he has warned us of these things: but when he tells of the dying love of our Lord Jesus Christ to us poor sinners, and what grace and mercy he can shew in changing our hearts; he is all alive, and seems to feel every word he says.

*Far.* Why, the people say, he has it all off by rote, and that he has no book, but the Bible, with him in the pulpit. He must have a wonderful memory.

*Tho.* By rote, Master! he has it all in his heart; and by the grace of God, he has enough in his heart for a thousand sermons; and as it comes from the heart, so it goes to the heart. Blessed be God, it comes to my heart, I am sure of that.---Well, after sermon we all go home, and then we treat ourselves, for once in the week, with a dish of tea, and again talk over the good things we heard at Church. At seven o'clock, we go down to the Vicarage; and to see how lovingly Madam Lovegood shews it towards us all when she comes into the house, would do any one good; how she helps to bring out the forms and chairs, and seats us all comfortably in the kitchen and hall; and when we are ready, our dear Minister comes in, and repeats to us what he has been preaching before, and exhorts us, and prays, and sings with us, so charmingly; that there comes such a blessing with it, as makes it feel like a little heaven upon earth.

*Far.* Ah! but master Thomas, our Rector speaks

and preaches *desperately* against these private meetings, and says your Parson keeps a '*Venticle* ; but what he means by it I can't say ; I suppose it was some hard word he brought with him from Oxford.

*Tho.* Mr. Lovegood is not the first man that has had all "manner of evil spoken against him," but we are sure it is "falsely, for Christ's name sake;" so that we can all "rejoice and be exceeding glad."

*Far.* Well, Thomas, it is to be hoped you have had enough of religion after all this.

*Tho.* Enough, Master ! why, as we are obliged to keep to very sharp labor through the six days, it would be a thousand pities to lose any part of the only one day given us, to seek after our heavenly rest : for what is the body to the soul ? Blessed be God, we have a little more, after all this ; we have some more good talk at supper, a chapter, a psalm, or hymn, and a prayer ; and then we throw ourselves into the arms of our dear God and Saviour, and sleep on earth as though we were to wake in heaven.

*Far.* But, Thomas, does God Almighty require all this religion from you ? *would not less do ?*

*Tho.* Why, Master, these things are our delight ; we do not serve as slaves, but as sons ; we serve, because we love the service : look into the Bible, Master, and you will find, what my wife and I find, that religion is regeneration, and that holiness is heaven ; all the Lord's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are paths of peace." I wish every family, and all the world, were but as happy as Betty and I.

*Far.* I will look into our great Bible, when I get home ; but I am ashamed to say, I know more about the christenings and burials, that are written in the first leaf, than I do of the book itself. But how is it that you are so fond of talking about your dear Betty ?

*Tho.* Why, she is the joy of my heart, and the comfort of my life.

*Far.* Where did you meet with her ?

*Tho.* At Church.

*Far.* Why, surely you did not go to Church to seek for a wife.

*Tho.* After I began to know the value of my soul, I only went there to seek for salvation. But about half a year after I was converted from my sinful courses, I used to see a mighty decent dressing young woman, who came from Mr. Blindman's Parish, to our Church; and I thought of it; (I hope not too much, when I should have thought of something better,) if I married, that the Lord might intend her for my wife; and as I used to meet her at Mr. Lovegood's house, I once plucked up courage and plainly told her what I thought about it; but I could get nothing out of her, but that she could not think of it till she had made it a matter of prayer; then, thought I directly this is the damsel that will do for me; for, the Lord knows, I made it a matter of prayer also, and this made me ask her the same question again and again.

*Far.* L---d, Thomas! do your sort of people go to prayer before you are married?

*Tho.* O Master! if I may be so bold, you should not "take the Lord's name in vain," it is a breach of the third command: but we wish to pray upon all such occasions.

*Far.* I confess, I am apt to say words I should not; but how did the match go on?

*Tho.* Why a little after this, the young woman went and consulted Mr. Lovegood about my offer; and one evening Mr. Lovegood sent for me to his house, while she was there, and so down I came; and as I had no *conceivance* why he sent for me, and when I saw her there, my heart went pit-a-pat, in a manner I never felt it before. We then talked over the matter before him; and he read to us that wonderful good exhortation in the marriage-service; shewing the duties there would be between us: then he went to prayer with us, after this we promised each other marriage: and as soon as we were out-asked, we



were married accordingly. They do say, matches are made in Heaven; and I verily think ours was made in Heaven, for I have been as happy as a prince ever since; for nothing makes us miserable: we can praise and bless God for every thing.

*Far.* Well, Thomas, I am sure you are a happier man since you have *taken to this new religion*.

*Tho.* New religion, Master! why it is as old as the Bible; and, I am sure it is as old as the Common Prayer Book, and the Articles, and Homilies of the Church.

*Far.* Why, Thomas, you are quite a *scholard*: what do you mean by the Articles and Homilies? I never heard any thing about them in our Church.

*Tho.* Ah! but Mr. Lovegood tells us about them in a very precious manner; and, I am sure I shall for ever bless the Lord, for the good I have received from what he has shewn us from them, and from the word of God.

*Far.* Well, Thomas, I must have another talk with you, for I want to know why *you changed your religion*.

*Tho.* Master, I will tell you at any time you please, how the Christian religion *changed me*.

*Far.* Then I will come again as soon as I can; but it begins to threaten rain, and I cannot hobble very fast, with my gouty legs. Farewell, Thomas, and here's a shilling for your boy.

*Thomas's boy.* Thank you, Master, and be so good as to thank my young mistresses for the six-pence they gave me, when I brought the band-boxes from Madam Flirt's, the milliner.

*Far.* Ah! band-boxes? Since my daughters have come home from that boarding school, they have all turned out such fine misses, that the family is all of an uproar. Such new-fangled fashions and customs, I never saw before. I *rue* the day I ever sent my daughters to that boarding school. But I must go: good day, Thomas.

*Tho.* Your Servant, Master.





THOMAS'S COTTAGE.

## DIALOGUE II.

THOMAS NEWMAN'S CONVERSION BY THE MINISTRY OF  
MR. LOVEGOOD.

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FARMER LITTLEWORTH, THOMAS NEWMAN,  
AND FAMILY.

*The Farmer goes into Thomas's Cottage, and waits till he comes home to dinner. After some conversation with the Wife and Family, Thomas comes in.*

*Tho.* **A**H, Master! are you come into our poor habitation?

*Far.* Yes; for I was afraid to stand in the field, because of the gout.

*Tho.* Well, thank God, by his blessing on my health, I am able to get bread for myself and my poor family too; for I know nothing of the gout.

*Thomas's wife Betty.* My dear, see what a nice haslet Master has sent us. We have no need of frying any bacon with the potatoes to-day; for I am going to fry a bit of Master's kind present.

*Far.* Why, we killed a pig yesterday, and I sent Sam with a little, that you might taste of it.

*Tho.* Thank you, Master, a thousand times; for a little fresh meat is very *relishable* to a hard working family. [The dinner is prepared.]

*Betty.* Come, Billy, my dear, leave your loom, it is your turn to ask a blessing. [They all stand up.]

By the bounty alone of our Saviour we live,  
Ador'd be his name for the food we receive;  
But, O! may our spirits be graciously led,  
To feed on himself—he is heavenly bread.

*Far.* There's a good boy; I wish I had taught my children a few such good things, and then my poor

Harry might not have turned out such a desperately bad boy. But Thomas, while you eat your dinner, you are to tell me about *changing your religion*.

*Tho.* Well then, Master, I'll tell you as near as I can, how, as I said, *religion changed me*.---My father, you know, was a poor working man, and died of a consumption; and then my mother went to the work-house with two children. I was the oldest of them, and was put out apprentice to old James Gripe, who used to work me morning, noon, and night, and half starved me; and his wife Margery was worse than he. So I ran away from them, and went to the Justice about them; and his Worship questioned me very hard and sharp; but when he found how cruelly I was used, he acted very *good-naturedly* towards me, and said he would not suffer the poor parish 'prentices to be ill used by any body: so he got me a better place at Farmer Thrifty's, where I had plenty of work, and good victuals and drink. But the farmer was all for the world, and many of the family were *desperate* wicked; and as I grew up, I wonder they did not make me as wicked as themselves. But wicked enough I was, God knows; for I scarce ever went to Church, unless I was to meet some one there, or to shew my new clothes when I had any. I had no more notion of a Bible, or what it meant, than one of the horses I used to drive at plow.

*Far.* Why, Thomas, you had a *good heart at bottom*, or you would have followed more of their bad courses.

*Tho.* A good heart indeed! when I never prayed, or read my Bible, or thought of my soul, or any thing else, but wickedness. But you shall soon hear what a good heart I had: for I well remember, as though it were but yesterday, when I was about seventeen years old, while we were carrying barley; just as we were going to bind, about half the load slipped off the waggon, threw me down flat on my face, and then rolled upon me: and what thoughts I then had, no mortal can tell. I could neither struggle, cry, nor breathe.---



There I lay till I was quite black in my face: and when my breath was almost out of my body, I thought these words sounded like thunder in my ears, "Lost once, lost for ever!" O what agony and pain I felt! while my senses seemed almost gone: and before the barley was taken off, I appeared to be quite dead for a while; but when the fresh air came to me, I soon began to breathe; and when my senses returned, I remember I could not, but in my blind way, make somewhat of a prayer to God for my preservation; and directly the waggoner, and the rest of the men, began to *jeer* me for my devotions; for I had but just before been singing one of my old foolish songs. But terribly bruised I was, and was obliged to keep my bed for three days, and could not go to work for a full fortnight afterwards.

*Far.* It was a very narrow escape indeed, Thomas, but did it not drive you to make some good resolutions? I remember, when I had the gout *deadly* bad in my head and stomach, I vowed many, and many a time, that I would mend my ways; and once I sent for Mr. Dolittle, and he told me, he thought it would be no harm if I *did a little more*; but the Lord knows to my shame, as soon as I began to recover, I forgot all my vows.

*Tho.* Ah! so did I, Master: but I have since found, that all our resolutions to mend our ways, come to nothing, *till God changes the heart*; and so it was with me; for directly as I could again get to work, I soon forgot my prayers, and was as light and as thoughtless as ever. For, though I had a little pride in me, not to neglect my work like many others, yet nothing like a fair or a wake for me. I am ashamed to think what a fool I used to make myself; especially once at Mapleton fair, where I was dancing almost all night at the Stag's Head, when I was no more fit for such games than one of our cart horses.

*Far.* But surely, Thomas, there can be no harm in a little innocent mirth now and then.

*Tho.* Why, I'll tell you, Master: I am never afraid of what I do, provided I can but feel prayer while I do it. Now at my labor, I can sing and pray with a good conscience all the day long; but I never could ask God's blessing when I went to a wake; or that he would protect me at a horse race. Pray, Master, if I may be so bold, do you ask a blessing over the card table when people come a merry-making to your house?

*Far.* Ah Thomas! you come too near home; I must not tell you all we do at our house.

*Tho.* But Master, if you dare not tell all, the Lord knows all.

*Betty.* I am afraid, my dear, you press Mr. Littleworth rather too hard.---[To the Farmer] I hope you will excuse him, Sir; my husband means no harm.

*Far.* No, no, Betty, I am sure Thomas means well: I shan't be angry! and if our Rector, Mr. Dolittle, would *shave us a little closer*, I don't think we should be the worse for it: I am sure many of us need it bad enough.---But Thomas may go on with his story.

*Tho.* Well, on I went year by year, getting worse and worse, till some years afterwards, when I first came to work for you, and it was about that time our Vicar was removed to some sort of a '*thedral*' place, I think they call it; and then some noble gentleman, *Lord Chancellor* I think it was, gave Mr. Lovegood the living.

*Far.* The *Lord Chancellor* you mean, Thomas.

*Tho.* Ay, ay! it may be so: he is a great man, and a mighty man with the King. May God bless him, and the King too a thousand times, for sending such a good Minister among us. Well, soon after Midsummer our new Vicar came, and as it was the first time, a many people were there to hear him. Though we had heard nothing of him, till we saw him in the Church; yet it was to admiration how he read the lessons and prayers; they sounded like new prayers to me—he read them so wonderfully fine---somehow

he seemed to feel every word he read. But when he got into the pulpit, we did not know what to make of it, for he had no book with him, but a little Bible. We thought for sure he had left his sermon book behind him; while every moment we expected he would be *fast*; but on he went for a brave long time: and it is wonderful how lovingly he spoke to us, while he preached from this text; "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves, your servants for Jesus's sake." He told us, how he hoped he was sent purely for the good of our souls; and how fervently he had prayed to God that he might come with a blessing among us; that his house, his heart was open to us, even the poorest of us; and that all his time and strength should be given up for our good. Never did any man surely win upon all the people by such a sermon, in coming to a new living, like our Minister.

*Far.* Hold, master Thomas, not quite so fast; for there was old Mr. Goodenough, the schoolmaster, spoke against him downright, at the first sermon; he said publicly, in the church-yard, he had no notion of such *new-fangled* teachers, and that all the Parish were *good enough* already, and he wanted to be no better; and that 'every tub must stand upon its own bottom; and from that time to this, the old gentleman has come to hear Mr. Dolittle, of our Parish, and says, his doctrine suits him best. And again, there was that noted good old lady, Madam Toogood; though she bore it pretty patiently the first Sunday; yet when your Parson made it out the Sunday after, that all the people were as bad as so many devils, she bounced about as if she had been half crazy, and went away to Mr. Blindman's Church; but of late she has taken to come to our Church, and always sits in Madam Dolittle's pew: and to be sure how notably she held forth when she came to drink tea with my wife and daughters; what things she had to say against Mr. Lovegood, and all his followers; then she began telling us how strict she was to her Church, and Sacra-

ment; how often she said her prayers, and that in regard to her giving away to the poor, she was even *too good*.---But, Thomas, I'll tell you a secret---While Madam Toogood was cracking and boasting away all the time she was drinking *scandal broth*, as you call it, her servant who came to light her home, was telling in the kitchen of all her stingy tricks:---how she made ever so many people sick with her dish-wash, which she called broth; and how, while she was reading the psalms and lessons, and doing her devotions, she would keep scolding all the time: and that once upon a time, when she had *made herself up*, by the Week's Preparation, for the holy Sacrament; after she came to Church, she found that it was to be put off, as it was so near Easter; and that then she fell into a terrible passion, and said, "Lord have mercy! have I had all this trouble for nothing?" and that she was a downright scold, that no servant could live with her above a month or six weeks, before they were sure to be off. To my way of thinking, her religion is but of the *shim sham* sort after all.

*Tho.* Well, Master, if this old lady can brag she is not "like other people," like the Pharisee, let me come in with the poor Publican, and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"---his prayer will best suit my case. But if Mr. Goodenough, and Madam Toogood, did not fear leaving their Parish Churches, why should you be afraid, at least once in a way, to leave yours?

*Far.* Ah, Thomas! you have me there. But go on with your story.

*Tho.* Why, Master, though his first sermon so won upon my heart, yet that very sermon which Madam Toogood found such fault with, was the sermon which gave me to see and feel my ruined state, a thousand times more than any sermon I ever heard before. How he ript up the deadly wound that sin had made in my ignorant and hardened heart; a wound that I was now sure, none but Christ could heal. I remember well the text; "The heart is deceitful above

all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" ---How plainly did he then shew, from the Bible, the rueful state of all mankind: how that, when Adam fell from God, all fell in him: and this he shewed was the truth, all the Bible over: how that, before the flood "the wickedness of man was so great upon the earth:" and all flesh had so corrupted themselves before God, that there was but one family, (that of Noah,) in which the fear of God was preserved among the many millions which were upon the earth; and that a merciful and a righteous God, could never have sent down such a judgment, if the great wickedness of man had not deserved it at his hands. And then he shewed, that such was the hardness and wickedness of mankind, that as soon as they began to multiply upon the earth a second time, they became again as vile as ever: that all the *waters* of the flood could never wash away the filth of the world: that then he tried the *fire* of his wrath upon the filthy cities of Sodom and Gomorrah: but still man continued the same most wicked creature: and that even afterwards, when God took one family to himself, that they might be his own peculiar people; as was the case with the Jews, though he was perpetually shewing the miracles of his power before them, and among them, more than any other people, with the gifts of his providence; yet while the meat was in their mouths, they rebelled against him, and made themselves worse than the heathen who knew him not: and that even when the dear Son of God himself came down from Heaven to save us, the Jews rejected him, and the Gentiles nailed him to the cross.

*Far.* Why, Thomas, when I was a school-boy, I used to read over my Bible then; and I remember, what you say is all very true.

*Tho.* Then why should Mr. Goodenough, and Madam Toogood, be angry with our Minister for telling the truth?

*Far.* To my way of thinking, people may have as much religion as they, without so much outside shew.



*Tho.* But Master, I must tell you how our Minister went on. From the Bible, he showed us how that people lived now-a-days, just as they did ever since the world began. And, to be sure, what he said of the abominable lives of all mankind, shewed how true the Bible is. How he laid out the wicked ways of the world, in all their public wars and cruelties against each other. How he shewed, that whenever people could get together, it was only for all sorts of wickedness, cursing, swearing, fighting, lewdness, and every thing that was bad. Then he told us what miserable creatures sin makes us in our own houses; that malice, anger, pride, and cruelty, were the tormentors of every family; while Bibles were banished; prayer neglected; holiness laughed at, and every thing that related to the soul and matters of salvation, were never thought of: and that though, through the grace of God, some were saved from this dreadful state, yet, that the word of God had declared it, That “broad is the gate that leads to destruction, and many there are, that go in thereat;” and that “narrow is the way which leads to life, and few there are that find it.” Then the good man stopt, and wept like the rain, as a father would over a dying child, he dearly loved. So I took it; and then, for the first time, I began to weep over my sinful state. O! thought I, does that dear servant of God love my soul better than I love it myself; while I thought, that surely he meant all his sermon against me; for my conscience told me I deserved it, and a thousand times more. There I sat, with a broken and contrite heart, for the first time; weeping over my sad condition as I never wept before. And who should I see in the next pew, but Ned Swig, as he was once called, of the Golden Lion, (and where I had often been on my sinful practices,) who scarce ever came to Church before, crying and grieving for sin; still more affected than myself.---  
[Thomas weeps.]

*Far.* Thomas, why should you cry? You should not be melancholy, for, I dare say, God Almighty will forgive you.

*Tho.* Why, my dear Master, I know he has forgiven me; and like poor Mary Magdalene, it is fit that I should weep, as she did, out of love to him that loved her so much, because she had much forgiven.

*Far.* To be sure, there is a wonderful alteration in Master Edward's way of living; for they say, he once kept a *deadly* bad house; and that the first time he heard Mr. Lovegood, he went directly home, and turned two drunken fellows out of his house, and pulled down from the walls all the merry songs and pictures, which he had bought to please his customers. To be sure, some of them, they say, were enough to make one split one's sides with laughing; and his wife thought *for sure* he was mad; though since she has become as strong a follower of Mr. Lovegood as himself: and in about a month afterwards, instead of his merry songs and pictures, it was all about religion:---A Journey from Time to Eternity, in one place; Mr. Dodd's Sayings in another: and then over the chimney-piece, ever so many parliament acts against tippling and drunkenness, cursing and swearing: and then two fine pictures, called the *Higroglipics*, or some such hard word, of the natural and spiritual man; but that is above my reading. Thomas.

*Tho.* And it was above mine too, till I heard Mr. Lovegood. But now I find, as we pray in the Christmas Collect, "That all who are regenerate, and born again, and are daily renewed by God's Holy Spirit," are spiritual men, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit: and that natural men act according to the natural corruptions of their heart; and that explains the two trees, which are meant to *notify* what man is in his two different states.

*Far.* Well, I am sure, I wonder Ned had such resolution to reform: I suppose, he must have lost

many and many a golden guinea by his religion: for since he has taken to this new way, they say, he does not draw half the *drink* he did; and I wonder how he can keep up his Golden Lion: for it is said, no man can have a drop of drink beyond a pint or two; and that, from year's end to year's end, not a drunken man is ever known to come out of his house.

*Tho.* Now this is all true, and yet Master Edward is provided for in a way wonderfully providential; for the precious word of life, held forth by our dear Minister, has drawn many a poor sinner from afar to our Church; and then away they all go to the Golden Lion between the services.

*Far.* What! from the Church to the Alehouse?--- That is as bad as in our parish.

*Tho.* Why, Master, if the good people in your parish should go from the Church to any of the Alehouses, that they might talk about the sermon, read the Bible, and sing God's praises, while they refresh themselves, I should see no harm in it.

*Far.* Ah! Thomas, though we have no such flockings to our Church, yet our Rector has some good moral sermons, if we did but practise them better.

*Tho.* I only meant to say, that it is Church work with us all the time, and if Master Edward has lost some of his customers, he may have his reward partly in this world: yet certainly he still loses some golden guineas; but in the room of these he expects a golden crown. For once he lived by sin, but now he lives by faith; and I am sure, while the Bible is true, he'll never starve: "for if we first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these things are to be added unto us."

*Far.* I confess, there is not such an Alehouse in our town, though there are enough of them.

*Tho.* What! are none of the *gentlefolk*, justices, or *quality* of the town, willing to assist in reforming them?

*Far.* Hush, Thomas, I am Churchwarden this

year; they made me swear a *desperate* strict oath against all these bad ways; and if I were to stir in it, every one would be against me; but I'll promise you, the oath gripes my conscience pretty sharply; and I do think if I were to come to your Church, I should be in a state of *desperation*, unless I should mend my ways.

*Tho.* Nobody that comes to our Church is led into a state of desperation; for as soon as ever our dear Minister saw many of us weeping under a sense of sin, after that sermon, he besought us all to come to Church in the afternoon, as he could not leave us till another Sunday; that we might hear what mercy there was in the gospel for poor sinners; and from that time forward, we had an afternoon service.

*Far.* Yes; and a fine bustle this made among many of the *Parsons* up and down the country, for bringing up such sort of customs of *double duty*, as they call it, in villages. They say they have no notion in making the common people so *over-larned* in their religion. And *Parson Shallow* told us in a sermon he preached in our Church, while our Rector was gone after some great Lord, in hopes of another living; *as how* putting such wise notions into the heads of the common people, would teach them to overturn the state; but according to my notion of the matter, many of those sort of *Parsons* are much more fond of their wages, than their work.

*Tho.* Why, if Mr. Lovegood had come into our Parish on the same footing as you took the lease of your farm, he would have had a right to have made a bargain for his sermons, as you do at market for butter, cheese, cattle, and corn; but, God be praised, he only thought of the salvation of our souls.

*Far.* Well, well, and our Minister says he wants to make us good too, if he can; for he tells us a deal more of our duty than many of us practise; and we have all his sermons round once a year. I have heard them over nineteen times; and he says we shall have no new ones till we practise the old ones

better; though he has given us two or three famous new ones of late against modern '*Thusists*, which come round about Whitsuntide. Madam Toogood says, one of them he borrowed from Mr. Blindman; and the text is, "If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch." And a trimming sermon it is.

*Tho.* Why, I have heard our dear Minister these seven years, and he has his heart full of sermons, and they are always new.

*Far.* Now, Thomas, I *think* on that you are very uncharitable; for though I believe your Minister *at the bottom* is a better man than ours; yet you should not condemn all ministers if they don't preach *off-hand*.

*Tho.* Nay, that is not true, Master: for there is that dear loving gentleman Mr. Fearing, he dares not preach as our Minister, and some others do, without his Sermon-Book, but he reads as blessed Sermons to us, as ever man can write. I love to hear him to my heart, dear man. But, Master, if you please, as the time slips away, I would rather tell you about the afternoon-sermon, which was such a blessing to my poor bleeding heart.

*Far.* Well, I can stop a little longer.

*Betty.* But, Master, if I may be so bold, would you like to eat a little bit with us, in our plain way? I c n fry a fresh bit if you please. Billy, fetch Master a clean trencher.

*Far.* No, Betty, I thank you; I had rather go hungry to my dinner. But let us hear, Thomas.

*Tho.* O Master! after my heart had been so deeply cut in the morning, that instead of going home to dinner with the family, I took my bread and cheese, and went into the fields, walking about, crying with Job, "Behold, I am vile;" and with the poor publican; "God be merciful to me a sinner!" When I heard the bells ring, away to church I went; and twice to church on the same day, I never went before. On the road I met poor Master Edward; I began



telling him the feelings of my heart ; and, instead of answering me, he wept ; and I wept too. We well remembered, how much evil we had done to each other, by being mess-mates in sin ; and into the Church we went. Our dear Minister soon came in ; and in the second lesson he read these words : “ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” These words so affected him, that he stopt and wept---then wiped his eyes, and read them over a second time. After prayers, he got into the pulpit, and took the same words for his text ; and O, such a sermon, sure, never was preached before ! He shewed, all the Bible over, that never did any poor sinner sue for mercy but he had it. He told us of Manasseh, of Saul, the Philippian gaoler, and the thief upon the cross : that all these poor bleeding penitents were at once accepted, without any other righteousness but what was to be found in him who died to justify the ungodly ; and that *whosoever*---and again he said it, “ Whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out.” Never, sure, did any father yearn over his children with more love than our dear Minister “ yearned over us in the bowels of Jesus Christ.” O what a time of love was this ! How Edward looked at me, and I at him, while we both began, for the first time, to look to Jesus Christ, who died for the redemption of our poor ruined souls !

*Far.* Why, I have heard people say, he is a very loving-hearted man :---I should like to hear him once in away, if our Rector would but ask him to our Church, though I fear there is little chance of that. But was this all you did for your salvation ?

*Tho.* Why, Master, nothing more could be done ; for the love of Christ broke our hearts into a thousand pieces : from that moment we felt the chains of sin drop off from the soul, and we were at liberty, to love and serve the Lord. For now we began to experience what it was to be “ made new creatures in Christ Jesus ; old things passed away, and all

things became new." Being thus "made partakers of the divine nature," and "renewed in the spirit of our minds," that prayer in the Communion Service, we trust, was now answered, which we might have *said*, but never *prayed* before: "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit; that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name." And when he concluded that blessed sermon with these words from St. Paul; "I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service;" with a hearty Amen, we at once found that we could give ourselves up to him to live to his glory.

*Far.* Ah! Master Thomas, what you say is very moving, and I dare say, very true; yet I have heard, all the followers of your Vicar are not such *saints*, for all this: for there is Mr. Feigning, the 'Squire's steward, though he is a wonderful stickler for your *parson*, is no better than he should be: and Mrs. Fairspeech, though she comes with such a wonderful sanctified face, loves a *sly drop* as well as any of her neighbours, and then scolds her husband, for not being of her religion.

*Tho.* Yes; and it grieves us to the heart, to think that there should be any "who name the name of Christ, and do not depart from iniquity:" but hypocrites there always were, and will be; yet real religion is none the worse for them. But still, you know, Master, the gospel has done wonders among us. Common swearers, and others, who never prayed before, have been made to pray of late: drunkards have become sober, and their ragged families decently clad: sabbath-breakers, who had heart for nothing on that day, but vanity and sinful mirth, can now fill the house of God, and find in it their heaven upon earth; yea, and families, where wrath and anger reigned, are now ruled by love; by "that meekness and gentleness which is in Christ Jesus." Thus have we happily proved "the gospel to be the power of God to our

salvation," by the blessed fruits of righteousness which have been produced thereby.

*Far.* I don't wonder that you are so fond of your sort of Ministers, while they do you so much good. And as to your Parson, from all that I have heard, let who will speak against him, I believe in my heart he is a good man, and that made me pull my hat off to him the other day, when he was coming out of Mr. Considerate's house; and even for that, some people *jeered* me, and asked if I meant to be his convert. If our Parson were to hear only as much as that, he would be desperate angry at me: but I begin to fear, that neither he, nor I, are so good as we should be.

*Tho.* Nobody can tell what a blessing we have in that dear gentleman; and what good he does among us. But you know, Master, how people are terribly hardened in sin, if the lives of the Ministers, and other great folk, be inconsistent with the gospel; and how many there are now-a-days, who scoff outright at the Bible itself, when such men so mortally wound so good a cause. Yea, such men had a thousand times better never preach at all; while their lives so belie their words.

*Far.* Well, I must confess, that I have many times thought that if I were as good as the parson, I need be no better. But is not young *Parson* Merryman one of your sort of late? I remember him when he was a strange wild *blade*: how he used to gallop over my farm; shouting and roaring like a madman, after Lord Rakish's hounds; and how *deadly* angry he used to be with his uncle, who would have him made a parson of, because there was a good fat living in the family; how he could crack his jokes, how soon he *did over* his Parishioners in the afternoon, that he, and the gentlefolk who came to see him on the Sunday, might not be disturbed from dinner and the bottle; but all this was sad talk for a Parson.

*Tho.* Yes, Master; and I dare say you have heard that when our Minister was called to preach before my Lord Bishop, and all his clergy, how that worthy

young gentleman, was so affected at the things he heard about the duty of Ministers, (what they should preach, and how they should live,) that he could not be at rest in his conscience, till he spoke to Mr. Lovegood; and now every body wonders at what an altered man he is.

*Far.* Aye: and I well remember it, when he came to our town, while the Stage-play people were there, and how he romanced with our daughters; and what a racket he kept up, when all of them should have been in bed and asleep, it would be a shame to tell.

*Tho.* Yes; but then he was a Minister of man's making; but now he is a minister of God's making. Once he loved his sports, but now he loves the souls of his Parishioners: once he loved the fleece, but now he loves the flock; once he was for this world, but now he is for the next. O Master! what wonders are done by the grace of God on the hearts of sinners.

*Far.* Well, Thomas, I believe Mr. Merryman is a true convert. But I must be going; you and your family have picked up the scraps pretty clean.

*Tho.* It is too good to be wasted: thank the Lord, we have had a charming meal. [Thomas to his daughter.] Come, Betsy, my dear, it is your turn to give thanks.

*Betty.* [To the daughter.] Don't be ashamed, my good child; but let Master hear how well you can say your thanksgiving hymn. [The daughter says her hymn.]

The beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air,  
Are kept by thy pow'r, and fed by thy care;  
Thy merciful providence, faithfully nigh,  
Sustains the poor ravens whenever they cry:  
But they cannot praise thee; they know not from whom  
The streams that they drink and their sustenance come:  
Far wiser may we be, and thankfully own,  
That all our supplies are from Jesus alone

*Far.* There's a brave girl; here is sixpence be-

tween you and your brother, for saying his grace before dinner; and when you lye-in, Betty, I will remember you.

*Tho.* The Lord bless you, Master, with his grace, for your kindness. For you and Mistress have always been very good to Betty and me. But you would have me tell you how we live; and, to my mind, you would not think we do right, if we were to neglect our chapter and our prayer, because you are here. Betty's a good scholar; and I have a little pride in me that people should know how *bravely* she can read. [Betty takes down the Bible, reads by Thomas's direction, with an eye to his Master's good, the latter part of the 14th chapter of St. Luke.]

*Tho.* [To Betty.] Can't you remember, my dear, what a wonderful sermon our Minister made against all these sad excuses; how that a man could not purchase a piece of ground, buy a few cattle, have a little trade, or marry a wife, but out of all these things, innocent in themselves, they could find an excuse to neglect their salvation, and despise the marriage-supper of the gospel!

[Thomas then offers up a short prayer: prays for the King, and his favourite, the Lord Chancellor, for sending them Mr. Lovegood; and that God would bless his ministry to them; and, after some other petitions, prays affectionately for his Master and his family; and especially for the poor prodigal son, that had left his father's house, and was gone to sea. The Farmer gets up much affected;---turns to the window,---stifles his concern---wipes his eyes, and says---]

*Far.* Thomas, I'd give the world to be as good a man as you are: and that my wife was as good a woman as your Betty. Well, well, I will pluck up courage, and come and hear Mr. Lovegood next Sunday, come what will on it; and I'll try to bring my daughter Nance with me, for she does not seem to be so bad set against Mr. Lovegood as the others;



but I know I shall hear enough of it from Mr. Delittle and my neighbours. O, Thomas! you must be right, and I fear I am wrong.


*Tho.* I wonder that gentleman should say such hard things, wherever he goes, against our good Minister! and that he should so often preach against him as a hypocrite and over-righteous '*Thusist*! surely, it is out of ignorance. The Lord open his eyes! But I am a few minutes beyond the time of labour. Come, Thomas, my boy, let us be gone, Master wants to be at home.

*Far.* Farewell, Thomas.

*Tho. and Betty.* The Lord bless you, Master, a thousand times, for your kindness.

## DIALOGUE III.

THE EFFICACY OF GENUINE REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE,  
EXEMPLIFIED IN FARMER LITTLEWORTH AND HIS  
DAUGHTER, MISS NANCY.



MR. AND MRS. LOVEGOOD, FARMER LITTLEWORTH,  
MISS NANCY, AND THOMAS NEWMAN.

WE left the Farmer much struck and affected by Thomas Newman's Conversation and Prayer. On the next Sunday afternoon, he and his daughter Nancy attended at Brookfield Church, after he had been at Mapleton Church in the morning. He received the Word with solemn surprise; and was soon melted into tears. Thomas immediately caught his Master's eye, and began to mingle the sympathetic tear with his. Mr. Lovegood's looks were directed that way; and he was so overpowered at the scene, that for a while he could scarcely continue his discourse. Mr. Lovegood's engaging style of preaching, though far remote from all that was tragical and bombastic; but from the natural simplicity and godly sincerity of an affectionate heart, had frequently a great effect on his auditory; and remarkably so on the Sunday afternoon when the Farmer first attended.

Let the reader conceive what this mirror of piety, as a Parochial Minister, must have felt, while every word he spoke opened the sluices of affection, which produced the penitential tear from the fixed eye of this aged sinner, now before him. Surely the heavens never blessed the earth with a richer

shower than then descended on the ministry of this wise and holy man! Nor was the conversation less affecting between Thomas and his Master when the service was ended. He was at once disarmed of all his prejudices, and mingled almost every word with a tear. Miss Nancy's mind began also to open to receive the truth, if in a less rapid, yet not in a less gracious manner.

When he arrived at his own house, Mrs. Littleworth, who did not know that he had stolen away to Brookfield Church, as he generally used to saunter about his farm on the Sunday afternoon, conceived he had heard some very bad news, and begged to know what it was. He said it was very good news. The question was naturally asked, If he had heard any thing about Henry, their Son. The Farmer began to explain the nature of the good news, or glad tidings of salvation, he had been hearing at Brookfield Church, mixing each word with a tear. The family at once began to suspect that his brains would be turned, and that their peace would be ruined by his *new* religion.

No opposition, however, from that quarter, prevented the Farmer and Miss Nancy from giving all possible diligence to attend the means of grace.---His visits to Thomas Newman were now almost as constant as each returning day; while the Farmer and Miss Nancy became exceeding anxious for a speedy interview with Mr. Lovegood: and this was the more needed, lest the Farmer should be cast down with over-much sorrow. A morning was therefore fixed, when Thomas, a great favourite with Mr. Lovegood, took the liberty to introduce them into his company for his further instruction and advice.

Having knocked at the kitchen door, it was opened by Mrs. Lovegood, who was then occupied about her domestic concerns: Thomas Newman, with his accustomed modesty, thus introduces the conversation.

*Tho.* Madam, if I may be so bold, I hope no offence, but my Master and his daughter, Miss Nancy, are under great *concernment* about the state of their souls, and would be very glad if they may but talk to our Minister. I told them what a tender-hearted gentleman he is, and their cry is, morning, noon, and night, "What must we do to be saved?" The Lord be praised!

*Mrs. Loveg.* Come in Thomas. [To the farmer and his daughter.] Walk in Sir: I am sure Mr. Lovegood will be happy to see both you and your daughter. Nothing delights him so much as to attend on those who are in earnest to seek for the salvation of their souls; a visit from the best nobleman in the land, would not have given him half the pleasure.

*Far.* Ah Madam, we should not have been so rude as to come, but it is about our poor neglected souls, that I and my daughter made bold to call on Mr. Lovegood.

*Mrs. Loveg.* No sort of apologies are needed Sir on these occasions. I will go in and tell Mr. Lovegood directly, that you wish to see him. [Mrs. Lovegood goes in and informs Mr. Lovegood of the event. He immediately comes out of his study and invites them all in. They were scarcely seated, when the Farmer, with a faltering tongue, thus expresses the language of his broken and contrite heart.]

*Far.* Oh Sir! since I have come to your Church, I have discovered, what I never thought of before--- What a state of misery and *ruination* I am in.

*Loveg.* A happy discovery dear Sir. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." There is no need to despair of salvation in Christ, when once we are led to despair of salvation in ourselves.

*Far.* Oh Sir! you cannot tell how my poor heart has been cut up. I am such a ruined sinner. I never thought what a state I was in, till my man Thomas Newman, first persuaded me to come to your Church;

and now I find, as to the salvation of my soul, I was as ignorant as a heathen; and you cannot tell what a deal to do Thomas had, before he could persuade me to come and hear you: I was afraid I should be so laughed at by my neighbours.

*Tho.* Why Master, as you are one of the Church-wardens this year, no wonder you *hung upon that*; especially as every body knows how Mr. Dolittle *takes against* our dear Minister.

*Far.* Ah Thomas! but now I find, neglectful sinner as I have been all my life long till now, that I have a soul to be saved. [To Mr. Lovegood.] And then Sir, I thought I had no business to come to you, because you are not the proper Minister of our Parish; and then, God forgive me! what wicked and romancing speeches I have made against you, when Mr. Dolittle, and other Ministers of the same sort, would be with us. But it was all through ignorance. --I beg your pardon Sir, a thousand times: surely I am one of the wickedest sinners upon earth; and if God had cut me off in the midst of my sins, I must have been miserable to all eternity: but now ignorant and wicked as I have been, I wish to be instructed how such an unworthy sinful creature may yet be saved.

*Loveg.* Why Sir, the first step to real spiritual knowledge, is to be convinced of our ignorance: nor could you have known any thing of your ignorance, if it had not been for a degree of the manifestation of that divine knowledge, whereby the heart of a poor sinner is "turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

*Far.* Why Sir, I thought nobody wanted to be converted but Jews and heathens; but now I find I want converting as bad as any of them: for sure I am, at least so I think I feel, that none of their hearts could be *wickeder* than mine; though I kept up somewhat of a shew in going to Church, and paying my debts, and in not having so much outside wickedness as others of my neighbours have.



*Miss Nancy.* I am sure father, you could not have *vainer* thoughts of that sort than I had, only because I was not so eager in running after different pastimes as my brother and my sisters were; and because I did not like to go to bed till after I had said my prayers; while my brothers and sisters thought nothing about it; and yet while I was saying them, I should be sure to be thinking of something else.

*Far.* Ah, my poor son Harry! The Lord only knows what is become of him. I fear the *ruination* both of his soul and body must be laid at my door. I never thought so much of the wickedness of his ways as since I have been convinced of the wickedness of my own. Oh! it cuts me to the heart, that my dear child should be lost for ever, through the neglectful conduct I have set before him. I have ruined him, and I fear I shall be eternally ruined myself. [Farmer weeps.]

*Nancy.* Don't weep father---Perhaps he is still alive, and should he live to return; if you can get him but once to come with us to Brookfield Church; who knows but it may prove the salvation of his soul?

*Far.* The Lord grant it my dear child! But oh, what a bad example I have set before all my children: how wicked and thoughtless my whole life has been! I now begin to see so much of the evil of my ways, that I have been ready to sink into downright *despair-ation* a thousand times over.

*Loveg.* And so we all must think, when once we are convinced of the native wretchedness of the heart. A sight of the holiness of God, and of our own impurity; is enough to sink us into the dust.

*Far.* Why now, there Sir was my foolishness; because I always loved to act a little *good-naturdly* towards my neighbours; I was ignorant enough to think that it all came from some natural goodness belonging to my heart. How could I think that I had a good heart, while it has been bearing such wicked fruits all the days of my life?

*Loveg.* Ah! but when God directs us to look a little deeper, we shall discover a thousand evils lurking within, which we never suspected before. It is by the spirit of truth alone, that we can be convinced of the lying stratagems of sin.

*Far.* Oh Sir! what a sermon you preached last Sunday morning; and Thomas thought as I did.--- How you made it out about the young man in the gospel, when he said to our Saviour; "All these things have I kept from my youth up." How ignorant he was of the inward wickedness of his heart before God, because it might have been glossed over with a little outside whitewash before man.

*Loveg.* Yes; but as I then explained matters, he did not know that the divine "commandment is exceeding broad," and reaches to the very thoughts and intents of the heart: the sinful principle he sees within, as well as that which is outwardly manifested before man, is equally odious in his most holy sight.

*Far.* Ah Sir! all the time you were preaching, I saw how just and true it was; though I confess with shame, my outward conduct has not been so good before man, yet I now see what an abominable sinner I am before God. I am sure, if every angry thought be murder; if every unclean thought is adultery; and if every covetous thought be theft; if it only be committed in the heart; there are none of the commandments but what I have broken-a thousand times, and a thousand times to that: and as to taking the Lord's name in vain, that has been my common practice all the days of my life; aye! and at times worse than that ---The Lord have mercy on me!

*Tho.* Why now Master, though I have often been so bold as to tell you how sinful and wrong it was "to take the Lord's name in vain," yet to my mind, I never heard you curse and swear like the common reprobate sinners, who can hardly open their mouths without an oath.

*Far.* Oh no Thomas! when I was within your hearing, I could bridle my tongue a bit; but when I was with others; especially if I was in a passion, I am ashamed to think, though I may not have been so big a reprobate as many others, what wicked speeches at times I have made; such as I never dare to make use of again. [To Mr. Lovegood.] And then, Sir, what a sad hypocrite I have been; though I was ashamed to swear before Thomas, because he was a better man than myself, yet I was not ashamed to swear before my God: and I now find I have neither feared him, nor loved him, all the days of my life. And then Sir, though I have outwardly kept a little *tight* to my church, yet for all that, I now see I have been one of the biggest Sabbath-breakers that ever lived.

*Loveg.* Sir, it is a great mercy if you have been convinced of the hypocrisy of your formal services in the house of God.

*Far.* Ah Sir! what you say is a *gripping* word: I am ashamed to think what a sad hypocrite I have been on that point also. While I was making others believe that I was taken up with nothing but my devotions, all the time my mind was dealing with other farmers, about how I should act, and what I should get on the next market day.

*Loveg.* But now Sir, these inward Sabbath-breaking thoughts you utterly abhor.

*Far.* And so I had need: but if all buyers and sellers, ought to have been whipt out of the temple, I ought to have been whipt out of Mapleton Church a thousand times. If I "drew near to God with my lips, I am sure my heart was far from him." All the time I was there, my head and my heart were just like the market-house: for while Mr. Dolittle was preaching, I would be thinking about the price of butter and cheese, hay and corn; then I would be bargaining about cattle; then I would be selling a litter of pigs; for I had no great heart to mind what Mr. Dolittle said, as I knew what was to come next; having heard

his sermons so many times over : and these were the thoughts that kept me awake, otherwise I should have been fast asleep, full half the time.

*Loveg.* This proves that you had no spiritual conception of the extent of the fourth commandment. It is astonishing with what negligence we all read the scriptures in our unregenerate state : how few ever notice the strength of that expression, as it relates to the observation of the Sabbath, “ thou shalt not think thine own thoughts, or speak thine own words.”

*Far.* Ah Sir ! and I was quite as bad in the Church-yard, as I was in the Church : not a word had any of us to say about what we had been hearing or doing ; yet it is amazing how *glib* all our tongues would run about the news of the week, and about every body’s *concernments* but our own : to my mind, I almost broke the Sabbath as much by going to Church in my way, as others do in going to the Ale-house.

*Loveg.* I am indeed afraid that there are some who go to Church to break the Sabbath, almost as bad as others, who are more notorious and profane in their outward violation of the hours of that sacred day ; but though all this may feel to you a very painful, yet I have no doubt, but that it will prove a very profitable discovery : we never shall be led to renounce a Pharisaic dependence on ourselves, till we are convinced of our total depravity and ruin.

*Far.* Why there Sir again, I never thought of that text, till I heard you mention it from the pulpit the other day, how that the Pharisee was the man “ that *trusted in himself* that he was righteous, and despised others ;” and now I find though I have been such a wicked sinner, I was foolish enough to “ *trust in myself that I was righteous,*” because old James Gripe, who lives in the next farm to mine ; is such an uncommon wicked, selfish, surly fellow, and *never* goes to Church, *nor no* where else : but now I see Sir, according to what you say, how foolish I have



been, in comparing my life to those who have been outwardly *wickeder* than myself, instead of examining my heart and actions according to what we find in God's most holy law: and then, when our Minister Mr. Dolittle and his family, used to come to our house, for their visitings, cardings, and merriments; he would be telling us we never need to be afraid of a little *harmless* mirth, provided we had but *good hearts at the bottom*: but now the more I look into my heart, the more I find of its wickedness, top, bottom, and all throughout.

*Loveg.* Well, Sir, and that is just what God's word says of all our hearts; that "they are deceitful above all things, and so desperately wicked, that none but God himself can know them." Bless God therefore dear Sir, that a degree of this knowledge has been communicated to you; otherwise you might have continued a wicked, self-righteous Pharisee all your days, making a little god of your own righteousness, while in reality you had no such deity to adore.

*Far.* Now I'll tell you Sir, what above all things, put me out of conceit with my foolish notions, that I was righteous. How you laid it out last Wednesday at your lecture, about the first and great command, about loving God with all our hearts; and when you said that none could truly love God, unless they wished to be perfectly like him; and while you were bringing such scripture texts to prove the point, I was *certain sure*, that what you said about the love of God, I never knew nor felt. How you did *work away* on that word; "the carnal mind is enmity against God." I am sure my carnal mind has been all over enmity against God. Sometimes I think within myself, that it is quite impossible such a sinner can be saved.

*Loveg.* But Sir, being through divine mercy, blessed with these serious impressions, you will naturally be led to read your Bible with attention; and there you will learn, that Christ died "to justify the



ungodly," that " while we were enemies we were reconciled." No matter dear Sir, what you have been by nature, though, may it always be the subject of your holy grief and concern ; you are now to consider what you are to be by grace, while you humbly wait on Christ to receive the regenerating power of the gospel on your heart.

*Far.* The Lord grant that I may be a changed man ! I would give away a thousand worlds if I had that grace, so that I might be that downright Christian which you preach from the pulpit, and which I find in the Bible. Well, well, I am sure of this, if the Lord does not shew me mercy, and change my heart, I shall be ruined for evermore.

*Loveg.* Why Sir, your very cry after mercy, is one good evidence that you have already obtained it : none ever seek for mercy till convinced of their need of it, or in other words, till they are blessed with " repentance unto life." They who have received the gift of a broken and contrite heart, have received one of the greatest blessings divine mercy can bestow ; it is for such humbled sinners, that all the rich promises of pardon, life, and holiness, are freely held forth as the " gift of God, through Jesus Christ."

*Far.* Well, well, I would not throw away the little hope such a poor sinner as I am, may have in Christ, for all I am worth : though it seems to me, if ever I am saved, I shall be the greatest miracle of grace in all the world. I don't care now, what any one may call me, or what people think of me, or what I suffer, if I may but be saved at last.

*Miss Nancy.* Oh Father ! I wish I was as much concerned about the salvation of my soul, as you are about yours. [To Mr. Lovegood.] I fear I cannot be right, because I feel so little. You can't tell Sir, what terrors of conscience my poor father has had ; I have felt nothing like them ; though I know what a sinner I must be, from what you said upon that text, " Thy will be done."---I never did the will of God properly in all my life ; and what you

say in the pulpit, is just what I read all the Bible over.

*Loveg.* But I can tell you my good young friend, you are mistaken in this, supposing that *terror* is necessary to constitute the blessing of repentance. Terror arises from a mixture of unbelief, which naturally degenerates into despair: though it becomes us to hate sin, and dread the commission of it, yet there is no reason why a poor returning prodigal should despair, while the gospel is nothing but a revelation of mercy and love to the vilest of the vile.

*Nancy.* But I have been afraid, lest my repentance has not been deep enough, so as to prevent me from falling back again into the sinful ways of the world.

*Loveg.* The repentance which is most genuine, is that which springs from love: we never can wilfully offend, where we sincerely love; and this is that holy grace which fills us with a godly jealousy over ourselves. You ought rather to be thankful, that the Lord has kept you from that tremendous sense of wrath which the guilty sinner feels; while the humble penitent believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, has such cause to rejoice in his forgiving love, the moment he is enabled to believe there is nothing before him but mercy and grace, and all freely given "without money and without price."

*Far.* Why then I fear my repentance can't be right, because at times I feel such horror upon my mind. After I have been giving myself up to Jesus Christ, in my poor way, and am gone to bed, I cannot sleep for fear: for O what thoughts I have of "the wrath of God abiding on me!"

*Nancy.* My father was reading the other evening about the conversion of the Philippian gaoler, what strong convictions he had, and how he was made to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" I wish I felt more.

*Loveg.* And don't you remember in the same

chapter, how Lydia was converted, how the Lord mercifully opened her heart, without the least terror, or dismay, or sudden surprize? And the conversion of the one was quite as genuine as the conversion of the other.

*Far.* [To his daughter.] Oh Nancy my child! what sweet words these are for the comforting of such poor sinners as you and I!--Mr. Lovegood talks to us, just as Thomas said he would: I hope we shan't talk so despondingly any more, and that we may yet be saved.

*Tho.* Why should you doubt it Master? Though I am ashamed to talk before our Minister, yet can't you remember about the two "immutable things?"

*Far.* Ah! the two immutable things---That is all my hope.

*Loveg.* What was that, Thomas?

*Tho.* Why Sir, my Master came down to our house the other day, and *most sorely* distressed he was about the state of his soul; a deal more that day, than ever I remembered him before. He told me, that all the sins of his youth were brought into his mind, so *thick* and *fast*, as that they all appeared to him in such a light, so much worse than ever he thought of them before, that he was almost ready to despair of salvation *outright*. Dear gentleman, it made my heart bleed to see how he wept and cried; yet I could not but be thankful for it all the time.

*Loveg.* I have oftentimes noticed, that people who have been long habituated to a careless course of life, are generally under their first awakenings, visited with very strong convictions; while others, who are called when young, are frequently "allured by divine love."

*Tho.* [To his Master.] Well Master, this is neither against you, nor Miss Nancy; no matter how we are brought, if we do but come; for our Lord says, "whosoever cometh, I will in no wise cast out,"---

[To Mr. Lovegood.] But I was going to tell you Sir, of another of my Master's troubles.

*Loveg.* What was that Thomas?

*Tho.* Why you know Sir, when poor sinners are first convinced of their sinful ways, they generally are very simple hearted, and tell all they feel; so he told my Mistress, as he said to you, that he now had found it out, that he was a thief; an adulterer; a murderer; but he only meant it in a spiritual sense in his heart; and so because my Mistress could not take in the *grievances* of his mind, she thought *for sure*, he was going out of his senses.

*Loveg.* It is a pity your Master should thus have expressed the secrets of his heart in such strong language, as it is not probable that your Mistress, under her present dark conceptions of matters, could possibly comprehend them.

*Far.* Ah Sir! my heart was so full, I could not help it. The Lord convince my wife and children, as well as myself, of the evil ways of sin, and of the sinfulness of all our hearts; and they will soon find that I was once much *madder*, when I was running after sin, than I am now, since I have been seeking to fly from it. However, that was another reason, why I ran down to Thomas's; for I was in sore distress, and my wife and daughters said, they were determined to let Mr. Dolittle know, *as how* my new notions in religion had drove me mad. [To Thomas.] But Thomas, I'll leave you to tell about the two immutable things; I cannot tell of these things as you can. I am ashamed of my ignorance.

*Tho.* Why Sir, when my Master came to our house to talk about these things, and seeing him so much cast down, Betty put us in mind of that most comfortable sermon, you preached from that text about two Sundays before my Master took to coming to our Church. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for

God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us ; which hope, we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil ; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. vi. 17, &c. Betty and I told him all the sweet things we could remember, which you then said from that precious text : and that was the sermon which was such a blessing to poor dear Thomas Doubting ; so that for a while he almost seemed to forget that his very name was Doubting, it made him so cheery and comfortable ; and how it made him take to singing a part of that sweet hymn, again and again.

Jesus to thee alone I fly,  
And wilt thou let a sinner die,  
While trusting on thy sacred blood,  
I seek no other way to God ?

Thy tender heart will sure forgive,  
And bid a guilty sinner live ;  
For all that come thy grace is free,  
For Saul, and Magdalene, and me.

And the Lord grant that the same blessed things may be as comfortable to my dear Master, as they have been to poor Thomas Doubting.

*Loveg.* to *Tho.* Who is Thomas Doubting ? is it that poor man who stands near the pulpit leaning on the reading-desk door, with a hearing trumpet ? He frequently takes it from his ear to wipe his eyes, and I greatly admire with what a humble and contrite spirit he approaches the Lord's table, when he comes to the Communion.

*Tho.* Yes Sir, that is he. He makes and mends a few shoes in Upper Brookfield. He has such a tender conscience in what he charges, that he scarcely earns his bread by his labor, and some people cheat him into the bargain. He is a man of a very few words, for he can scarcely speak ; but he thinks he



sins. He is to my mind, very like Mr. Fearing in Mr. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. [To the Farmer.] And now Master, you may tell our Minister what Betty and I further told you about that precious sermon.

*Far.* To be sure, what Thomas and Betty then said to me, seemed to be wonderfully comfortable for a while: and at times I can't forget about the two immutable things, the oath and the promise of that blessed God who cannot lie; and what strong consolation this gives to every poor sinner who is flying from the wrath to come, for refuge to the hope that is set before him: and then again, about the anchor hope, and how safe and sure it is, when it is fastened on Christ within the veil; and how Jesus our fore-runner, is gone beforehand to take possession of heaven for us; and that we have nothing to do but to follow him, that we may be with him where he is, and there behold his glory;---I never thought of such things before, for I never heard any thing like it from Mr. Dolittle, how Christ is the high priest after the order of Melchisedec; how as a priest he is to pardon my sins; and how as a King he is to reign in my heart. But there, while I am thinking of these things, all the sins of my wicked and abominable life come in again so thick and fast upon my conscience; while at other times I still feel so much of the natural wickedness of my heart, as almost makes me ready to think I never can be saved.

*Loveg.* But Mr. Littleworth, have you forgotten what I said from the second lesson last Sunday afternoon, from the seventh of the Romans, about St. Paul's experience? Did you not observe how wonderfully the experience of that highly-favoured servant of God, tallies with that which every poor humbled believer feels, when struggling under the remains of indwelling sin? how he had to complain against himself, that though "the law was spiritual," reaching to the very thoughts and purposes of the heart, and was in itself "holy, just, and good," yet that he, as

it related to his corrupted nature, was carnal, sold under sin;" and therefore it was, when the struggle between the new and the corrupted or old nature began; that "what he did, he allowed not, and what he would, that he did not; but that what he hated, that he did?"

*Far.* Why, I thought when you read that chapter, that I might take some encouragement from the experience of St. Paul; I was quite in amazement, when I found it so much like my own. I never thought of the meaning of my Bible before I came to Brookfield Church. It was a Bible and no Bible to me.

*Loveg.* Then you shall hear how he farther complains against the natural corruptions of his heart, and you will find that his complaints were quite as strong as yours: "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not; for the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do."

*Far.* Now Sir, that is just as I feel since I have begun to think of the salvation of my poor neglected soul. I hope I shan't despair as much as I have done.

*Loveg.* Then the mystery of these different strivings begins to be explained to your heart: a little time ago, when "you were dead in trespasses and sins," you felt little or no contest whatever; but now you begin to feel the living principle of divine grace entering into contest with that horrid principle, which must rule till "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life;" and if by this, your confidence in self begins to die, yet I humbly trust, that your confidence in Christ will soon begin to revive; for though, as the Apostle says in the same chapter, "I was alive without the law once, (when I was a self-righteous Pharisee in my own esteem,) yet when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died; and the commandment which was ordained unto life, (if

I had kept it,) I found to be unto death: (because I had transgressed it;) so that sin, and my self-righteousness, deceived me, and the commandment slew me."

*Far.* Well, now I begin to think if the Bible be right, I am right: [To Thomas] the Lord be praised, that you brought me down to see this dear gentleman: I never felt myself so comfortable before.

*Tho.* And the Lord be praised Master, that we have got a Minister who knows how to open the Scriptures to us; what a wonderful book it appears to be!

*Far.* For sure it is. How charmingly it makes out matters for such poor sinners as you and I.

*Miss Nancy.* Aye! and for me too Father.

*Loveg.* Well Sir, if you and your Daughter find these considerations so comfortable to your mind, it may do you both good to attend a little further on the conclusion of the subject.

*Far.* Dear Sir, if I may be so bold, I should like to sit and hear you talk about it from morning till night, I am so thankful for it: it almost quite overcomes me.

*Loveg.* Then Sir, I hope the conclusion of this subject will not be less comfortable and profitable than the beginning. Upon the whole, it appears that the feelings of St. Paul are perfectly similar with all those who feel the same contest between nature and grace; or he would not have said, "I find then a law (that is, a wicked principle,) that when I would do good, evil is present with me:" but (notwithstanding this wicked principle,) I find another principle, or law, implanted in me by divine grace; that still enables me to say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man."

*Far.* Well now Sir, I begin to think I know a little what that "inward man" must be; for I hope I hate sin worse than a serpent or a toad; and I never thought of hating sin before; nor yet had a *conceivance* of being delighted in the law of God till

of late; and now I would give the world to be as holy as I should be: but at other times I feel such *desperate* bad thoughts, that I think nobody's heart can be so bad as mine; and it is on account of these good and bad thoughts opposing each other in such a strange way, that I am up and down, and down and up, again and again, twenty times over in the same day.

*Loveg.* Well Sir, if so, then you, I, and Paul, feel just alike; for he says, "I feel another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members:" and such feelings as these, are enough to cast us all down, and to make us cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But still, by the faith of the gospel, he was enabled immediately to start up again from a despairing thought, when he further adds, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord:" and then he sums up the whole of this mysterious combat, by adding, "so then with the mind, with the renewed nature, I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, with the corrupted nature, the law of sin." See, then dear Sir, what an abundant cause of thankfulness and joy, every poor struggling sinner has, while his faith and hope are fixed on him, who has promised to give us the victory through Jesus Christ. And when at your leisure, you can read the first part of the next chapter, you will there see, what beautiful things the Apostle says, about "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, setting us free from the law of sin and death." Oh Sir! what a mercy that all these struggling Christians against this body of sin and death, have the strongest evidence, even from these struggles themselves, that they are blessed with that divine life; for otherwise the contest could never have been felt; and what an infinitely greater mercy still, that God the Holy Spirit will abide by the work of his own grace; and never leave nor forsake us, "till he has brought forth judgment unto victory," and

made us more than conquerors through the prevalence of his almighty power: for it is the promise of him that cannot lie, that "sin shall not have dominion over us, as we are now no longer under the law, but under grace." And now dear Sir, what have you to say to your doubts and fears? While you feel the guilt of your sins, you never need fear the pardon of them through "the blood of the everlasting covenant; and as to the dominion and power of your sins, blessed be God! you shall be secured from that evil also; for the promise is, that you shall "be strengthened with all might by God's Spirit in the inner man:" and I am sure that the power of sin, however strong the struggle may be, shall never prevail against the power of divine grace: "When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Sir, as far as human knowledge can go, believing that you speak the language of simplicity, and godly sincerity from the bottom of your heart, I would almost venture to pronounce, notwithstanding your melancholy conceptions against yourself, you are a saved soul; and from this persuasion, I most heartily recommend to your notice, the text from whence our dear Lord preached in the synagogue of Nazareth:---"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Oh Sir! under the influences of the divine Spirit, may you be enabled to embrace these "exceeding great and precious promises, that by your believing in him who "saveth to the very uttermost," you may "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

[Thomas looks at his Master, and finds him dissolved in tears of joy; then adds]

*Tho.* My Master is so overcome at hearing these glad tidings, that he cannot speak to you; and before



he came, he was all full of fears, lest you should do nothing but examine him about his sinful life.

*Loveg.* Oh no Thomas! we have nothing to do but to tell of mercy and compassion to the miserable and the vile; but as your Master seems so much affected, we will conclude the present visit with a prayer.

#### THE PRAYER.

Most merciful, and compassionate Redeemer! We thy sinful and unworthy creatures, cast ourselves down before the footstool of thy grace, while we own the justice of the sentence which thy word has pronounced against us, "the soul that sinneth it shall die," and that "the just wages of sin is death." Yet, O blessed be thy holy name! we come to thee, because thou hast promised that "whosoever cometh, thou wilt in no wise cast them out." And can we doubt of thy purposes of mercy, when we read of thine amazing love in all thy deep sufferings even unto death, which thou hast sustained for our salvation? Shall we suspect either the ability of thy strength, or the willingness of thine heart of love, to reach the miserable case of the vilest of sinners who have been drawn by thy Spirit to plead for mercy? Forbid it dearest Lord, that through the unbelief of our hearts, we should be permitted to doubt the freedom of thy love, the riches of thy grace towards any of our returning race. Surely thou canst not frown while we lament and weep over our sinfulness before thee. Oh that our highest praises may be acceptable in thy sight that this poor aged sinner has felt the grace of a broken and contrite spirit, that at length he has been convinced of sin, and been enabled to fly from the wrath to come. Hadst thou left him to himself, and given him over to the hardness and unbelief of his own heart, how soon might he have finished his wretched life of sin on earth, and have received from thee the awful sentence of banishment into the re-

gions of eternal misery and death. But Oh! what has God now wrought: what has grace now accomplished? that an aged sinner, called almost at the eleventh hour of his existence, should be thus snatched as a brand from the burning, and made a glorious monument of thine amazing mercy and compassion. And while at times he may be ready to write such bitter things against himself, and to conclude that there is nothing before him but the judgment of thy wrath, so “justly revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;” yet still support his sinking soul, with all those rich consolations of mercy and grace, which flow to the vilest of the vile, “without money and without price,” through the riches of thy redeeming blood. While he comes with his broken, bleeding heart, still may he believe that the justification of his person, the sanctification of his nature, and his everlasting glorification also, were all secured in thee.

Oh! let thy young servant also, be taught to bless and praise thy name, that she has been kept from all those tremendous conclusions which many are found to urge against themselves, under the first discovery of the wickedness of their hearts; while thou art drawing her to thyself by the gentler cords of love, from the hateful love of sin, to seek for thy salvation.--- Oh! carry on thy blessed work upon her soul, that she may doubt no more of the sincerity of her conversion, for want of that deeper compunction of heart which others, according to thy wisdom, may be led to feel.

With all humility, suffer thine unworthy Minister to commend these dear new-born souls to thy most tender care. Oh! “preserve them as the apple of thine own eye, hide them as in the hollow of thine all powerful hand;” keep them at all times watchful and prayerful before thee, that they may still continue to give good evidence, that thy work of grace is well begun, which thou hast most mercifully promised to complete and crown in glory for evermore.

Most merciful God ! thine aged servant now begins “to travel in birth again, till Christ be formed within his relatives and dear offspring also.” Is any thing too hard for thee our God ? Can his poor prodigal son be gone beyond the reach of thine almighty arm ? Can he have exceeded the riches of thy boundless love and grace ? Art not thou waiting to be gracious, to give the returning son as an answer to the father’s prayers—— ?

[Here the Farmer was so overcome with grief for himself, with hope in divine mercy, and with agonizing concern for his family, and especially for his son, once the darling\* of his heart, that Mr. Lovegood was quite interrupted thereby, which compelled him, especially as his own mind was very much affected, thus very abruptly with a faltering amen, to conclude his prayer.]

The next day the diligent and devoted Mr. Lovegood employed his time in writing a most consolatory letter, for the perusal of the Farmer and his daughter, together with a hymn, which he composed for his use, supposing that it was just suited for the present penitential frame of his mind ; but still in hopes that he would soon be instructed to sing in a higher key.

This letter, after it had been read with many tears, was next lent to Thomas Newman ; he took it to Thomas Doubting, and poor Phoebe his wife, whose maiden name was Mistrust ; they next conveyed it to another good man, Titus Sadheart, and then afterwards to Jeremiah Littlehope ; all of them excellent Christians in walk and conversation, though of a very desponding cast ; insomuch, that between them all, the letter was so worn out, that a corner fold of it was entirely lost, so that a correct copy of it could not be obtained. The hymn, however, is so far in my possession, as that I can lay it before my readers tolerably correct.

\* Let me for once attempt to restore one fine old English word, now corrupted, and badly abbreviated into *darling*

## THE PENITENTS' CONFESSION.

Guilty and vile before thy throne  
 My Saviour and my God !  
 I fly to thee for grace alone,  
 And plead thy pard'ning blood.

Did ever live a wretch so base,  
 On this vile earth before ?  
 Oh ! manifest thy saving grace,  
 And bid me sin no more.

Pity my h<sup>u</sup> art, the sink of sin,  
 The sea of vile delight ;  
 'Tis now before thee all unclean,  
 Most hateful in thy sight.

My thoughts are all impure and vain,  
 My breath pollutes the air ;  
 Defilements of the deepest stain,  
 On my whole life appear.

Yet, let a sinner humbly lie,  
 And knock at mercy's door ;  
 A wretched sinner doom'd to die,  
 Would still thy grace implore.

O hear my cry, by sin oppress'd,  
 And save from death and hell !  
 Vouchsafe my laboring conscience rest,  
 And all my fears dispel.

On me that vast extent display,  
 Of thy forgiving grace ;  
 Take all the guilt of sin away,  
 And bid me sing thy praise.

Thy grace is an exhaustless store,  
 And thou thyself art love ;  
 Oh save me till I sin no more,  
 And all thy fulness prove !

## DIALOGUE IV.

THE FAITH AND HOPE, OF HUMBLIED SINNERS FURTHER  
EXEMPLIFIED, AND CONFIRMED ; WITH ENCOURAGE-  
MENT TO COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE.

---

BETWEEN MR. LOVEGOOD, MR. MERRYMAN, FARMER  
LITTLEWORTH, AND MISS NANCY.

THE Farmer and his Daughter returned home considerably comforted by the consolatory language of Mr. Lovegood : while both of them seemed to enjoy somewhat of that cheerful hope, which genuine Christianity inspires. Yet a circumstance occurred the Sunday afterwards, which was the cause of considerable grief and perplexity to both of them. For on that Sabbath, the Sacrament was administered at Brookfield Church ; and to that ordinance, neither the Farmer, nor his Daughter could presume to approach ; not only, as they still felt themselves so exceedingly unworthy ; but especially, as they had not conferred with Mr. Lovegood on that solemn Subject. It was pitiable to see how the tears trickled down the aged Farmer's cheeks ; and what strong indications of grief Miss Nancy manifested, when they turned their backs on that feast of love ; leaving still their hearts behind them. To see the exemplary Mr. Worthy and his family ; Thomas Newman, and his beloved Betty ; Edward of the Golden Lion ; and even Thomas Doubting, with a variety of others, Mr. Lovegood's joy and crown of rejoicing ; following their excellent and revered Pastor upwards towards



the Chancel; while they were turning their sorrowful footsteps another way, casting many a wishful look behind them; this they felt a most painful event.

Thus they went, from Brookfield church, with such down-cast hearts, as they had scarcely ever felt before: not knowing whether to charge the blame, more on their timidity than on their unworthiness.

Thus they returned home, full of pensive grief and perplexing thoughts; while another circumstance was the natural result; neither the Farmer, nor his Daughter, could keep up their spirits at the family meal.

Mrs. Littleworth, Miss Polly, and Miss Patty, came home from Mapleton Church, as frothy, and light as if they had returned from a play-house: chattering away about the news of the Parish, in what sort of dresses the *quality* of the town made their appearance; who were asked and out-asked in Church: but above all, in high admiration on Mr. Dolittle's Sermon; who had been setting them right about Baptismal regeneration, which all the wild and wicked children in the town, were supposed to have received, when they were christened, and perhaps by a *Priest*, as wicked as themselves.

O! says Miss Polly, and Miss Patty, we shall never mind again what Father says about regeneration: we like Mr. Dolittle's doctrine best; and if we mend our lives a little before we die, and then receive the Sacrament, as we have all been *Christened*; we are sure that will be enough to save us.

To this poor vain, and worse than papistical talk, the Farmer had no spirits to return an answer; only added that he was grieved to the very bottom of his heart, that he had lived such an unworthy and neglectful sinner, as to render himself so unfit to receive the Sacrament while he lived. Upon which poor Nancy also dropt a tear, saying, that

Mr. Dolittle's regeneration would never do for her; for that she was sure, all the regeneration she had of that sort, left her, as soon as she left her leading strings; nor yet could she see how a little water sprinkled upon a child's face, could ever change its heart: neither yet could she bring herself to believe, that the Sacrament, like the extreme unction of the Papists, would ever prove a passport to those who had "made a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell," Isa. xxviii. 10. that they would never turn to God, till they could scarcely turn in their beds: and that she conceived it to be a feast of love to those, who by the true regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit, had been taught to live to God, and thus enabled to manifest his glory.

To this the Farmer adds, with a deep fetched sigh, Nancy my dear, I wish we had taken courage and stopt. Mrs. Littleworth, not understanding him, answers, Stop indeed,---what should you stop for? What signifies cooking victuals if you won't come home and eat them? [The Farmer rejoins;] I did not mean that stopping; but I wish with all my heart, Nancy and I had stopped to receive the Sacrament, which was this day administered at Brookfield Church. [Mrs. Littleworth replies:] And what a fine talk that would have made over all the parish! Mr. Dolittle has enough to say already about your running away from his Church while you are Church-warden; and if you take to go to Mr. Lovegood's Sacrament, we shall all be in a greater uproar still: I wish with all my heart, he was a hundred miles on the other side London. Dame, replied the Farmer; neglectful as I have been; I now find I have a soul to be saved. Neither being Church-warden, nor any thing else, by the blessing of God, shall keep me from that point; and though I have heard Mr. Dolittle's Sermon about his regeneration before now, and am told, that Archdeacon Smoothtongue preaches

that, or another very like it, every now and then to his congregation; yet I want something better than outward baptism, to wash me from the inside wickedness of my heart. And when our Savior spoke to Nicodemus on that subject, and said unto him, "You must be born again;" he did not christen a child, but spoke to an old man, as I am; and I don't hear that he christened him either, when he spoke to him. And as the Church catechism says; (I have not quite forgot it yet;) it is but "an outward and visible sign, of an inward and spiritual grace." I don't know what good the outward and visible sign can do for us, if the inward and spiritual grace be wanting: to my mind, that is like setting an empty dish, or painted victuals before an hungry man; and old Father Canting, one of 'Squire Massman's priests says, Mr. Dolittle holds the same notion about baptismal regeneration as their popish Church holds: only, that as all heretics are out of the Church, their baptism will do nobody any good.---To my mind, this is being in very bad company. [He then addresses his daughter Nancy.] O Nancy my child! if we live to see another sacrament Sunday at Brookfield Church, we won't do as we have done. What heart-breaking work it was to both of us; to turn our backs on such a precious ordinance; while there were so many good people went to partake of it. But I had no *conceivance* that it was administered in any of the country Parish Churches, but at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. You and I will go down again to Mr. Lovegood tomorrow morning, after you have done the dairy; (you know how *lovingly* he treated us when we went before;) and ask him if he will admit us to the table, and whether such unworthy sinners may kneel down together, and beg pardon for our sins, and give ourselves up into our blessed Saviour's hands: for come what will on it, to Mapleton Church I never can go again. It quite grieves

my heart to hear of souls being deluded, by such *shim sham* notions of regeneration. [And then adds.] I wonder how any people can believe their nonsense, when every wicked child in the Parish contradicts it. Ah me! I now remember it to my shame, what a sad *bout* we had of it at poor Harry's christening: How little the Parson seemed to mind what he was at: And what a sore lie his Godfather's and Godmother then told, in promising to renounce the Devil and all his works, which they never meant to perform. And how we kept it up at supper, with our cardings, and feastings, till we were half *toxicated*. O! it is shameful to think of it; and how that wicked *game* could be the cause of regeneration; I cannot take it in at any rate. Instead of dedicating him to God, which in bounden duty we ought then to have done, at that solemn Sacrament; it seems as if we had dedicated him to the Devil; and that has made him turn out such a wicked child. I wonder how the patience of God could bear with our wickedness.

[To this Mrs. Littleworth added.] Why Master, after two daughters, and two miscarriages, where was the wickedness of a little harmless mirth after we had a son? [The Farmer answers.] I wish it had been harmless: but instead of supposing somehow that he was conjured into such a changed state; it seems to me, that there was a curse on that day's abominable hypocrisy. O that God would but shew mercy on that wicked child! [And then adds to his wife.] I would give a thousand worlds if I could bring you with me, that you might only for once hear for yourself, and then perhaps my other Daughters might come with you. O what would I give for the salvation of all your souls! To be united together in this world; and to be for ever separated in the next---how it cuts and grieves my heart!

Mrs. Littleworth seeing her husband much affected, said no more. Ignorant of the power of that

divine grace which turns the heart, she had her strong apprehensions, that these, his *new notions in religion* would completely turn his head; and thus the conversation dropt.

The Reader however shall have more at large what further passed, at this second interview, with the pious and invaluable Mr. Lovegood; and what was the pleasant result.

When the Farmer and Miss Nancy arrived at the Vicarage; Mrs. Lovegood, with her accustomed attention, ushered them into the parlour; and entered into such conversation with them, as does credit to the character of the Minister's wife; while a message was immediately dispatched after Mr. Lovegood; who was then at Mr. Worthy's, in company with Mr. Merryman, where, since the great change that had recently been accomplished upon his mind, he had become as frequent a guest, as the duties of his parochial situation would admit.

From a natural vivacity, arising from a pleasant temper, properly corrected, by a spirit of watchful seriousness, and unaffected piety; he was greatly in the growing estimation of all who knew him: while he was glad to avail himself of the edifying instructions of Mr. Lovegood, to whom he looked up as to a parent, feeling at all times, his wise and salutary advice; as the richest treasure his mind could enjoy.

Mr. Lovegood and Mr. Merryman returned together, and immediately the conversation thus commenced.

[*Mr. Lovegood to the Farmer and his Daughter.*]  
How do you both do? I am very glad you have favored me so early with a repetition of your visit. I hope all is well.

*Far.* We thank you very kindly Sir. I hope we shan't be troublesome, but I and my daughter have been under sad disturbance of mind since we made bold to call upon you last Wednesday morning.



*Merrym.* O Mr. Littleworth! before you tell of your troubles I must give you a hearty congratulatory shake by the hand. How I thank God from the very bottom of my soul, that I see you here, and your Daughter with you, and on such an errand;--- what an unexpected mercy, to behold such an aged sinner, so graciously called, though so late in life.

*Far.* What an't you Mr. Merryman of Sandover? You seem somehow so altered, that I scarcely knew you.

*Merrym.* Yes Mr. Littleworth, I trust through infinite mercy I am altered; and you know there was need enough of it. Cannot you remember when I was riding like a madman after Lord Rakish's Fox-hounds about six years ago: how ever so many of us were galloping over your farm; and how he afterwards brought us into your house, because you were his tenant, in order as he said, to have some *fun with the farmer*, how ill we all behaved: I was half ashamed of it even then; but I have been made to be a thousand times more ashamed of it ever since I have been convinced of the evil state I was then in.

*Far.* Aye, Aye! and I have been as wicked in my way as ever you could have been in yours. Every body knows how wonderfully the Lord has changed your heart, but I have continued to be an old hardened sinner, all the days of my life; and never thought of my need of mercy till just the other day.

*Loveg.* Both you and Mr. Merryman, and indeed all of us must say with the Apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And when you remember what Mr. Merryman was, it should not only encourage you to hope for yourself, but for your son Henry also. If in the extent of some sort of wicked practices he may have gone beyond Mr. Merryman; yet he cannot have gone beyond the extent of divine grace to accomplish his conversion.

*Far.* [Speaking of Mr. Merryman.] Well, I cannot say how I thank God, to see that dear young Gentle-

man here this day; what the Lord has done on him he can do on me, and on my dear prodigal child also. [To Mr. Merryman.] Dear Sir! if he is yet alive, and if he should ever live to return, I do beg and pray of you, that you will tell him, how wonderfully the Lord has converted your heart: perhaps God Almighty may yet have mercy on him also. [To his Daughter.] Nancy, you and I my child, can tell him something what the Lord is doing on your heart, and mine. [Again to Mr. Merryman.] No man would be so likely to convert that dear lad from his evil ways as you would be: O dear Sir! for the Lord's sake, try all you can.

[The affectionate language of the Farmer quite overcame Mr. Merryman, and set them all a weeping.]

Mr. Merryman somewhat recovered, Ah my dear Sir! I cannot tell what a satisfaction it would be to me, to be an instrument of good to your son's mind, but it will require a higher power than ours.

*Loveg.* That is true; but no man would do better to begin the attack than yourself; though you were not left to be altogether so dissolute, as by all reports, that unhappy youth has been.

*Merrym.* But I am sure no one could be more light, and trifling, and thoughtless, than I was, till I heard your visitation sermon. [To Mr. Littleworth.] But I promise you if ever I meet with him, I'll attack him to the best of my power.

*Far.* And the Lord give you success! it is to admiration, what all the *folk* said of your conversion, after you left your wicked company and ways, and began to preach as our dear Minister does; trying all the way through your sermons, to convert poor sinners to God, and now I begin to love such sort of preaching to my heart; though it is quite new to me.

Just at this time a poor widow called at the Vicarage on behalf of her son; requesting a copy of his register, previous to his being bound an apprentice. And though it is the custom of some sort of Ministers, to take even such opportunities to catch at a

fee ; yet not so with the disinterested Mr. Lovegood. Though his preferment was but poor, and his family was growing large ; yet nothing could tempt him to be mean. He had the honour to shine bright in a humble sphere. And if others did but know the disgrace they entail upon themselves, by such pitiful demands, they would be more cautious, and less cruel. Let the Reader take this opportunity to wait till Mr. Lovegood's return, and the residue of this intercourse shall be concluded.

## DIALOGUE V.

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

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*Mr. Lovegood again returns to his company, and thus resumes his discourse.*

*Loveg.* [To the Farmer.] Before I left the room, you were hinting, that you came down to tell me of some fresh trouble; though I hope you heard nothing from me, that could have added to the perplexity of either of your minds, when you were last here.

*Miss Nancy.* Oh no Sir! I never saw my father so cheerful as he was, when we went home together after that comfortable talk we had with you. But Sir, last Sunday morning, when we came to Church, we found the Sacrament was to be administered, and we had no thoughts of that, but at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide.

*Loveg.* True Miss; in Country parish Churches it is now seldom administered, but on those great festivals; but since many poor sinners, have through infinite mercy, found their way to Christ, they wish to find their way to that comforting ordinance oftener than formerly. We have it therefore besides the great festivals, once every month; and if we were to have it oftener still, we should come nearer to the standard of the Primitive Church.

*Far.* But O Sir! what poor Nancy and I felt, when we turned our backs upon that blessed feast; for we could not dare to stop, because we felt ourselves so unworthy, and unprepared; and then

we ought first to have consulted you, before we came.

*Loveg.* Certainly it is consistent with the excellent advice given us in the Rubric; that "every person coming to the Communion should signify the same to the Minister," and I am sorry it has dropt into such general neglect; yet what you mention of your unworthiness, or unpreparedness, would not have prevented me, from giving you the warmest exhortation to attend, as far as I can judge of the feelings of both your minds.

*Far.* But Sir, if I were to tarry till I am somewhat better; I feel myself so very bad.

*Loveg.* Keeping from Christ, and those consolatory ordinances, will only make bad, abundantly worse.

*Miss Nancy.* Father, if you could take courage to come, I should be glad to come with you: can't you remember what Thomas Newman said to us on that subject? "If we tarry till we're better, we shall never come at all."

*Loveg.* The good man borrowed that excellent thought, from a book of Hymns I gave him; for if the sick keep from the physician till they have cured themselves, they never will be cured.

*Far.* I think I am sick of sin; and I am sure I am sick of myself.

*Loveg.* Will a man keep from food, because he is hungry? from pardon because he is guilty?

*Far.* But surely Sir, we should have done very wrong if we had come without any preparation, or self-examination, to the Lord's Table.

*Loveg.* Yes Sir, preparation and self-examination are our duties before that; and indeed every other ordinance of the Lord's appointment. But still we are never so worthy, as when we feel and lament our unworthiness; and never so unworthy, as when we ignorantly conceit ourselves to be worthy.

*Far.* If unworthiness be our best qualification, I have enough of that; and if the Lord does not save



me as the chief of sinners ; I know that I shall be ruined for ever. But Nancy and I have been thinking of what St. Paul says ; “ He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself : ” O what a terrible word that is ! and that makes us feel so much afraid to come.

*Loveg.* But if you examine what the Apostle says more at large on that subject, I humbly trust you will find that neither you, nor your daughter, fall under the guilt of such an awful sentence : we will take the Bible and examine the passage.

*Merrym.* Many an upright, timid Christian, has been kept from the Communion by a misconception of that passage. I had a deal to do, to bring poor Sally Faintheart to the table. I will read it while you explain it.

The Bible is brought, and the passage referred to ;  
1 Cor. xi.

Mr. Merryman asks, where about shall I begin ?

*Loveg.* From about the 17th verse, we may get a clear view of the Apostle's meaning. [The passage is read.] “ Now in this I declare unto you, I praise you not ; I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it : for there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper ; For in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper : and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in ? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not ? What shall I say to you ? shall I praise you in this ? I praise you not.”

*Loveg.* Now it evidently appears to me ; that the passage as it has been hitherto read, does not refer to that which the Apostle calls in the foregoing chapter, “ the communion of the body and blood of Christ ; ” but to a previous repast, which the primitive Christians had among themselves ; when they had all

things common, and lived together in one common hall.

*Merrym.* Before I began to read my Bible with more serious attention, I was not a little surprized how it could be, that such as came to partake of what is commonly called the Lord's Supper, should act in such a manner: and that even in those days, the conduct of some should appear so exceedingly irregular, that "every one should take before another his own supper, while one is hungry, and another is drunken," it should appear as if these feastings were conducted more like an indecent scramble, than a regular repast. Even in my thoughtless days, I never witnessed a behavior more indecorous than this. Merely receiving the Communion, could not have produced such irregularities as these.

*Loveg.* Yes, and we may further conclude that this disorderly repast was not what the Apostle calls the communion, from the style of the reproof administered by St. Paul; "Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?" which never could have been a consistent reproof, had it been a public ordinance: "or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them (the poor) that have no such houses." And further; it appears that no such a service could have commenced, from the direction given in the 33rd verse, that they were to tarry one for another; and we can hardly suppose that such a direction would have been needed, had a divine ordinance then been administered, where all would have been regularly assembled. Still I confess, it seems a surprizing circumstance, that such gross irregularities should have made their appearance in the primitive Church, and even in the Apostolic days; yet perhaps this difficulty also, is in a measure solved by the following observation: though doubtless many were truly converted to God by the power of divine grace, which at that time was so plenteously showered down from above; yet I apprehend, many besides were brought to make a profession of Christianity, without possessing this

divine change; by frequently beholding the astonishing miracles which were wrought before their eyes; and especially by the miraculous gift of tongues, so plenteously bestowed upon the Corinthian Church.

It was such as these, that brought with them all this disorderly conduct into the Church, or as it means congregation of God, where they first met for their general repast, and where *afterwards*, their religious exercises were performed.

*Merrym.* I should suppose, that is evident from the same passage; for as it was after the paschal supper, (which might have been imitated in these feasts of love) the Lord took the bread and blessed it: and so in the chapter that is now before us, we further read; “ For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it; and said, take eat, this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me; for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come: wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.”

[Mr. Lovegood to the Farmer and his daughter.] Now my good friends, the way is clear to give you that further explanation of the passage.

The former part of it evidently relates to that repast which the Primitive Christians had among themselves; called Love feasts, or feasts of charity; these were not of divine appointment; but were adopted for temporary convenience, during the rage of persecution against the primitive Church: these therefore in after ages, were very properly discontinued, being liable to considerable abuse, and inconvenience, after the enlargement of the Christian Church: but the latter part of the passage refers to a standing ordinance of our Lord’s own appointing; and there we are directed what sort of characters we should bear, that we may be worthy receivers of the same.

And herein the duty of self-examination is evidently enjoined. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat;" and the same we should feel as our duty to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith; 2 Cor. xiii. 5.\* or in other words, "if Christ be in us, the hope of glory;" by the graces of his Holy Spirit being found in our hearts. But how is it, when this profitable duty is well performed? When by self-examination we are led to a deep discovery of our extreme depravity, whereby we lament over, and abhor ourselves, so as that we can say before God, "the remembrance of our sins is grievous unto us, and the burden of them is intolerable."

*Far.* I am sure I have depravity enough to make me hate myself, such a greyheaded sinner as I have been, the Lord have mercy upon me!

*Loveg.* I humbly trust the Lord has had mercy upon you, or you would not have been enabled to cry for mercy. God in infinite compassion has been searching your heart by his Holy Spirit; and that makes you cry, "behold I am vile!" Now would you wish to die under the disease of your pollution, or seek for the remedy?

*Far.* O Sir! the remedy is all I want.

*Loveg.* Then if that be the case; self-examination has had the desired effect on both of you, if you wish to be saved from sin, and not to live in it.

*Miss Nancy.* I hope it is Sir, though my poor sisters do nothing but laugh at me for it.

*Loveg.* This should make them the object of your pity; and you must do all you can to win them over by love.

*Far.* I hope Sir we do; but when we left the Church last Sunday morning, and you gave out that precious hymn:

Dearest Redeemer take my heart,  
Let all I have and am be thine;  
Ne'er from thy cross may I depart,  
A sacrifice to Love divine.

\* In that passage the word reprobate is ill understood, it means one cut off from God.

Though I was in so much trouble; I really thought, I could then give up my heart to Christ.

*Loveg.* And if you both felt the same, why should you not come to the Communion, and give yourselves up to him in that holy ordinance?

*Far.* But perhaps we have not examined ourselves enough.

*Loveg.* Enough: what can you want further? You feel yourselves ruined without an interest in Christ: your long to be saved by his grace: and to live to his glory. All the self-examination in the world, cannot bring you to a better point.

*Far.* [To his daughter.] Though Mr. Lovegood speaks so *encouragingly*: yet what must we do? "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself;" and I am sure we are unworthy enough.

*Loveg.* That matter still remains to be set right: to what does that passage more immediately refer? not merely to eating and drinking the emblems of our Lord's dying love to man; but as connected with the improper behavior practised by them at their previous feasts of love; while unhappily for common readers, the most correct reading is found in the margin, as is mostly the case; though in general but little regarded; when it ought to be found in the text; for there, the tremendous word damnation, is much more properly rendered "*judgment*\* to himself;" and this exactly

\* There are no two words in the English language of a severer sound, than those of *damnation*, and to *damn*. Unfortunately our translators in different instances have rendered the word *κρίνω*, which seldom means more than to judge, to determine, to discern, to think, or esteem, by the much stronger expression to damn. And in other instances where the preposition, *κατά* against, is added to it, which consequently strengthens the evil sense of the expression; it is in different instances translated by the less vehement expression to condemn. I suppose by way of giving one compound word for another. It would require a long note, fully to exemplify this criticism, which is the less needed, as most good commentators make the same remark.



corresponds with what follows; "for this cause, many are weak and sickly among you; and many sleep;" thus it appears, that the more immediate displeasure of the Lord was evidenced against them, even in this world: because they did not properly *judge* themselves, they were thus *judged* of the Lord, that these temporal afflictions might work for their eternal good; and save them from all that future punishment which all sin deserves: and this they got by their indecorous feastings with each other.

*Far.* Why Nancy my child! when Mr. Crow the other Churchwarden, came to our house about parish business, and wanted to stop for cardings and supper as usual; he soon sheered off, when he found such ways were over with us. I must say it; and I cannot deny it; that such company is now my sorest grief; while I can love no company but those that love the Lord.

*Loveg.* If then you have nothing to do with such disorderly feastings, you can have nothing to do in "eating and drinking your own damnation," or rather judgment, by afterwards receiving the holy communion.

*Nancy.* But Father you were mentioning that other text; "He that doubteth is damned, if he eat; because he eateth not of faith;" You and I, at times are both of us apt to doubt; and that seems a terrible sentence against us.

*Loveg.* Terrible indeed! if we were to go by the sound of words, without considering their real sense; for there it evidently appears, that the Apostle had no reference whatsoever to the communion, but is speaking on quite another subject.

*Merrym.* Shall I turn to that passage also?

*Loveg.* No; there is no occasion, my memory will answer sufficiently for that purpose.

The primitive Christians were tutor'd with the strongest abhorrence of the abominable idolatries of the Pagan world; and it was the common practice of these Heathens, to turn every slain beast into a sacrifice to some of their imaginary deities: this they

did, when it was slain in the shambles, and sold there. This food some of the primitive disciples even refused to touch; and chose rather to live upon herbs, that could not have been so offered, than to partake of the food, as they conceived, thus polluted: and though this over-scrupulosity of conscience, was deemed by the Apostle as unnecessary, yet, while he applauded the tenderness of their consciences before God; he knowing that "the Idol was nothing in the world," but the mere imagination of a deluded mind, advised them to purchase "what was sold in the shambles, and to eat what was set before them, asking no questions for conscience sake; but still to be tender towards the consciences of others, who had not the same liberty with themselves; who ought also to "be fully persuaded in their own minds," that they did no wrong in eating the meat which these superstitious Heathens had sacrificed to their Idol gods. For that he who *doubteth* concerning the propriety of eating such meats, is *damned*, that is condemned in his own conscience, if he eats, because he eateth not of faith; not being encouraged by his own faith, to take that liberty which others could.

*Far. to Nancy.* What a blessing it is my child, to have a Minister to open the Bible to us as Mr. Lovegood does! We have both been distressing ourselves without a cause; what a deal of loving care and pains, this good Minister takes to set us right.

*Merrym.* Yes, and thus we are all directed to act by the same spirit which influenced the Apostle. What tenderness, patience, and forbearance, we are directed thereby to adopt towards each other in all such lesser differences, concerning some non-essential disputes, which have no connexion with those grand fundamental truths, on which we all depend.

*Loveg.* Yes, and the same improvement may be made about another immaterial dispute, that occupie

the minds of others of the primitive Christians about the propriety of keeping certain days. With what beautiful simplicity, he settles the whole point. "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not to the Lord (that is with the same uprightness) he eateth not; let every man therefore be fully persuaded in his own mind; and not to judge one another; for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." And if we have not sufficient time to enlarge on this subject, yet how should this direct Christians of various denominations, to unite in one, if all are "one in Christ Jesus, their living head:" and thus by forgetting all minor differences, fulfil the "Royal law of love."

*Far.* I thought when we went away, Mr. Traffic, and his son Billy, stopt behind to receive the Sacrament, though they were bred to the Meeting in our Town.

*Loveg.* True Sir; and I should be glad for the sake of the inhabitants of Mapleton, if their Minister was better taught, how to preach to the profit of his hearers. They being dissenters is nothing to me; it is our duty to hold communion with all who hold communion with Christ. Such little party differences should never prompt us to deviate from the rules of Christian fellowship with each other. I believe Mr. Traffic and his son are both sincere Christians, and that is enough for me. But have you any more objections to start? I shall be happy to remove every one of them that stands in the way of your approach to the Lord's table. I give you both this encouragement, as I humbly trust your recent convictions will terminate in your thorough conversion to God.

*Far.* Is this the dear man I used to laugh at, and despise for his religion a little time ago? It breaks my heart to think of it; The Lord forgive me, and I hope you will forgive me too.





"On the Sacrament Sunday, how admirably Mr. Lovegood conducted himself before his numerous congregation, giving the most affectionate exhortation to all who were seeking reconciliation with God, and who felt themselves anxious to be dedicated to his glory.

"The solemn and weighty manner in which Mr. Lovegood read the Confession had such an effect on the Farmer's mind, that almost every word produced a tear. When it came to his turn to approach the holy table, with his daughter kneeling before the Lord, to receive the tokens of the forgiving love of Christ to sinners, O how the tears trickled from his aged cheeks!"—*Dialogue V.*



*Loveg.* Forgive you, my Dear Sir, Aye! and I wish I had a thousand more of such to forgive, at this very moment: and I shall be most happy to prove it, by administering to both of you, the emblems of our Lord's dying love for our redemption; who has manifested infinitely more forgiveness to us, than we can towards each other.

*Far. to Miss Nancy.* Well my child, we will come, why should we keep back any longer? but I can say no more, it so overcomes me.

Mr. Lovegood and Mr. Merryman were not less overcome, than the Farmer and his Daughter; while they had to witness such an aged sinner being so humbled before God, together with the delightful simplicity of Miss Nancy's mind; Insomuch, that it was with considerable difficulty that Mr. Merryman could perform the office imposed upon him, by Mr. Lovegood, to finish the interview with a concluding prayer. No wonder that this was accomplished with considerable interruption, under such circumstances, and from a mind like his. Such affectionate feelings could not be stifled, under a recollection that he was praying in the presence of that invaluable instrument, who first brought him to the knowledge of himself, and of God: while the Farmer, feeling a similar attachment, was equally overpowered with himself.

It now only remains to inform the Reader, on the Sacrament Sunday afterwards, how admirably Mr. Lovegood managed the same subject before his numerous congregation: giving the most affectionate exhortation to all who were seeking reconciliation with God; and who felt themselves anxious to be dedicated to his glory, attempting to remove every stumbling-block out of the way; mentioning with much concern the state of some who went back from that solemn ordinance, respecting whom he still entertained a better hope; though they gave such a painful evidence against themselves, as though there

was the core of some allowed evil, still lurking in their hearts; giving at the same time, a most faithful warning to the openly profane; forbidding them to presume to approach a table that was never meant for them; as being one of the most awful, and presumptuous sins they could possibly commit.

After this Mr. Lovegood and his beloved flock repaired to this sacred feast of love. And had my dearest readers been placed in a corner of Brookfield Church; I conceive, such an impression would have been left upon their memories, as could not speedily have been forgotten. The solemn, and weighty manner, in which Mr. Lovegood read the confession, had such an effect on the Farmer's mind, that almost every word produced a tear.

When Mr. Lovegood came to read those consolatory passages of scripture, so appropriate to the feelings of a contrite mind, "Come unto me all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" repeating them with such emphasis, as though it was news just then afresh from Heaven; it was delightful to see how the Farmer's countenance brightened up with holy joy: but when he repeated the next passage; "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Thrice he repeated it; and for a short space he stood silent before them all; and while he was thus musing, "the fire kindled, and at last he spake with his tongue:" "My dearest flock, can you doubt for a moment, your portion in such forgiving love as this, under the transporting view of the astonishing grace and compassion of him, who "saveth to the *Uttermost*, them that come to God through him." Dear man! will his ecclesiastical rulers be angry with him? because he could not pre-

cisely abide by the prescribed form that was before him. He kept silent, even from good words, while it was pain and grief unto him, till his heart was hot within him; and at last he spake with his tongue; he was weary with forbearing; and he could not stay. The application of all this to the Farmer's mind, was almost beyond what he could sustain: and when it came to his turn to approach the holy table, with his daughter kneeling before the Lord, to receive the tokens of the forgiving love of Christ to sinners; O! how the tears trickled down his aged cheeks. This so overcame Mr. Lovegood, that he also turned about and wept, before he could proceed: the sympathetic tear became almost universal. As for poor Thomas Newman; judge what his feelings must have been, under a thankful remembrance, that he was the first, though humble instrument of bringing his Master under the word of life. In short; to see the old scoffing, careless, worldly-minded Farmer Littleworth, and his Daughter Nancy, thus giving themselves up to God, in such a truly broken and contrite spirit; produced such a scene at Brookfield Church, as human language can but faintly describe.

Such is the sympathetic love, that emanates from the throne of God himself, who put on the bowels of human compassion in the person of our dear Redeemer, that he might deal in mercy with our human race; such are the feelings he communicates to those happy Angels who surround his throne, filling them with unutterable joy, even over "one sinner that repenteth:" and such also, are the blessed sensations of the saints of God upon earth; while they hail each other into the new world of grace, preparatory to that triumphant state of glory which shall soon be theirs. O these "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord!" how reviving to the living Church of Christ: and how delightful their influences to the heart?

I could now, almost ask the Reader, to follow me to Thomas Newman's cottage, where the Farmer and his daughter had agreed to go, as they found the time was not sufficient to go, and return to their own house, between the services on these sacramental occasions: and I could almost like to narrate the conversation on that occasion also, if it might not swell this present dialogue to an unusual length.

## DIALOGUE VI.

THE CHURCH DEFENDED AGAINST FALSE FRIENDS AND  
INTERNAL ENEMIES.

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MR. DOLITTLE, THE RECTOR OF THE PARISH; FARMER  
LITTLEWORTH, AND FAMILY.

AFTER the recital of these former events ; it is natural to suppose, not only that the Farmer, and Miss Nancy kept up their constant attendance at Brookfield Church, but that the intercourse between them and Mr. Lovegood, was more constant and frequent. Mr. Lovegood also perceiving that the Farmer possessed a good share of natural intelligence, though but plainly educated, lent him many profitable tracts and publications ; and among others, the First book of Homilies, and many other treatises tending to shew from the first works of the Reformers, and from the articles and Liturgy of the Established Church, how correctly the truths contained in them, comported with the word of God. These the Farmer read with considerable avidity and delight. Thomas Newman giving him this opportunity, by the most upright attention to his Master's concerns, with the same diligence as if they had been his own ; while his mind was thus strongly occupied on better things.

The family, however still continued under terrible perplexity at this change : and after they had said all in their power to dissuade him against his *new notions in religion*, they concluded, it might be the



best plan to call in Mr. Dolittle to their aid. Happily, however for the Farmer, his mind began to be well settled and grounded in the knowledge of the gospel before this visit took place. Mrs. Littleworth and Miss Polly, consequently called at Mr. Dolittle's one market day, and invited him to come and see what could be done on this *melancholy* event. Soon afterwards he rode, one afternoon according to his promise, to the Farmer's house; and the conversation as it then took place, shall be next laid before the reader.

*Mr. Dolittle meets the Farmer at the door, and thus accosts him.* Well Master Littleworth, I am come to see how you are; I was afraid you were ill of the gout, for you have not been at Church above these three months.

*Far.* I am obliged to you Sir, for your kind enquiries; but I thank God, of late I have been better than usual.

*Dolit.* How is it then Sir, that you have been so remiss in your duty, by not attending your Church?

*Far.* Oh no Sir! I have not neglected Church, we go more constantly than ever; for I and my daughter Nance, have lately been to hear Mr. Lovegood.

*Dolit.* So I have been informed Sir; and in a little while longer, I should not wonder if he were to drive both of you mad, by his *enthusiastic harangues*.

*Far.* Why Sir, did you ever hear him?

*Dolit.* I hear him! No Sir, nor shall I ever disgrace my character by attending such *modern seducers*.

*Far.* Did you ever talk to him Sir?

*Dolit.* I talk to him! no; nor will any other *rational* Clergyman hold conversation with such *fellows*.

*Far.* "Does our law judge any man before it hears him?"

*Dolit.* O Sir! this is bringing matters to a fine pass. You can quote Scripture against your Minister already.

*Far.* Now Mr. Dolittle, it is not fit that either you or I, should put ourselves out of temper while we are talking about religion: but if you will be so kind as to come in and sit down, and drink a dish of tea, I should be glad to talk matters over with you; and if I am wrong, the Lord direct you to set me right!

*Dolit.* No Mr. Littleworth; while you, as Churchwarden, can act as you do, and set such an example as to leave your own Parish-church, and run rambling after such sort of teachers, I shall not think it proper to darken your doors any more. If you had gone to the meeting after old Dr. Dronish, it would not have been half so bad; for I am told, he preaches good, sober, moral sermons; though I confess he has some notions in religion I don't like; but to run rambling after such wild enthusiasts, is too bad.

[Mrs. Littleworth overhearing the conversation, steps out and adds]

*Mrs. Littlew.* But Sir, if you will not drink tea with my husband, yet I hope you will stop for my sake, and my daughters'; for his new notions in religion are as bad a grief to us, as they can be to you.

*Dolit.* Ah Mrs. Littleworth! I pity you to my heart. It is amazing how much the peace and comfort of people's families are broken up by these religious disputes.

*Far.* Well Sir, if you won't accept the invitation from me, you are quite as welcome to accept it from my wife and daughters: neither does religion, nor Mr. Lovegood, teach me to be rude or uncivil to my neighbours; so that such disputes cannot be laid to the charge of religion, but on those who oppose it. I should be very glad if you would walk in and sit down, that we may talk matters over in a

Christian-like manner; and while I answer for myself, if I should in any wise speak *unmannerly*, I'll beg your pardon.

*Dolit.* Well Sir, this is fair. I am apt to be a little hasty I confess; but you must not impute this *to the badness of my heart*.

*Far.* Why Sir, to my humble way of thinking, all that comes out of us, that is bad, comes from something that is bad within us. But pray come in Sir. [calls his daughter Polly.] Where is Sam? Tell him to take Mr. Dolittle's horse, put him in the stable, and give him a *lock* of hay, and a good feed of corn.

[Mr. Dolittle comes in; a fire is lighted in the best parlour, and tea is brought in; but no one appears but Mrs. Littleworth and Miss Nancy, to wait on the Rector.]

*Far.* Why Nancy, where are your sisters?

*Miss Nancy.* They are gone up stairs to dress.

*Far.* To dress! Why, were they not dressed before Mr. Dolittle came? Now all this they got by going to *that* boarding school. They can't make you a dish of tea without putting on some new-fashioned gown, or new-fangled cap, and some other *nonsenses*. I hope Sir, you will talk to them for their pride; I cannot see the sense of such ceremonies in our way of living.

*Dolit.* Perhaps not Sir; but *young ladies* will have their foibles: [Their appearance in a gaudy, taudry dress, prevents any farther conversation on that subject.]

*Dolit.* [continues.] Now Sir, I am ready to hear what has made you *change your religion*, and why you have left your Parish-church; in hopes that I may reclaim you, and bring you back to serve the Almighty in your own proper place of worship; where, according to our ecclesiastical laws, it is your duty to attend.

*Far.* Well Sir, as near as I can, I'll tell you all about it. When my father sent me a courting to my

present wife (Farmer Saving's daughter;) after we had made a match of it, we put our fortunes together, and I bought the lease of my farm of the late Lord Rakish, who was as *wild a blade* as the present Lord that now is; and as he wanted money, they say his steward received a *sly* sum of my wife's Father, that we might have a better bargain; but of this I have no certain knowledge.

*Dolit.* I doubt there are too many of these sly bargains made;---but what has this to do with your change in religion?

*Far.* Why having got such a good bargain, no world for me like the present; my heart was set upon it. I could be up early and late; about from fair to fair, that I might "buy and sell, and get gain;" and this I foolishly called the *main chance*; but as for my Bible and prayer, and the concerns of my precious soul, I had no more regard to these things than a beast.

*Dolit.* And pray where was the sin of this? Should not every young man mind what he is at, when he takes a large concern? But if you did not do your duty in *saying your prayers*, and attending your Church, that was your own fault.

*Far.* Yes Sir; these things, as they respect my worldly concerns, "I should have done, and not left the other undone." But that was not my case, for I was as wicked as---

*Dolit.* [interrupts] Hold Mr. Littleworth: for it has been told me, that when the Bishop came about to confirm in those days, no young man appeared so decent and so devout, as you then were; and that for some time afterwards you attended Church and sacrament very regularly: And if since then you have been a little remiss in your duty; yet it is to be hoped you will remember in due time, properly to return to it; and that you will die a good man; and it cannot be expected that people should be so strict in religion while they have to rise in the world.

*Far.* Ah! I well remember when the old Bishop came round our parts in those days, how Mr. Blind-man, in whose Parish I then lived, told us that our Godfathers and Godmothers were to answer for what we had done before; but that after we were confirmed, we were all to stand upon *our own bottoms*: and this frightened me *desperately* for a while; and away I went and bought myself the *Whole Duty of Man*, Nelson's *Fasts and Festivals*, the *New Week's Preparation*, and Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*; and for about two months I was so far *wound up* in my way, that I kept to my religion very strictly. But just about that time the old Lord Rakish would have a *merry-making*, because his son came of age: and many a resolution I made that I would not go after such *nonsenses*; but when I was told that young Parson Purbblind, Mr. Blindmad's curate, was riding by, with some other young sparks who were going there, I thought *for sure*, *parsons* must know better than I, and that there could be no great harm if I went too. So because I would not make myself particular, away I went, and there I got *deadly* drunk; and as I came home I fell off my horse. (Lord have mercy on me, had I died in that state!) But after that, I was ashamed to think of my religion; and as to my books of devotion, I soon laid them all aside; and to this day, they are quite as fresh as though they were just bought out of the book-seller's shop. And there was an end to all my religion till I heard Mr. Lovegood.

*Dolit.* Well but Mr. Littleworth, as you have got these good books still by you, why can't you, *in moderation*, again *take to religion*, and do your duty, without taking up this *new way*?

*Far.* Why Sir to speak the truth, I have not till of late discovered, that the heart, which Mr. Lovegood says is the seat of all our actions, is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and that till God sets that right, nothing can or will be right. This has been the cause why this world, which I



must now soon leave, was all my delight, while my heart neither knew God, nor desired to know him: and though I trust the Lord has pardoned me, yet I am ashamed to say what a wicked, worldly, neglectful sinner I have been all the days of my life; what a sad example I have set before my family; and as to my poor son *that* is gone away and left us, I am afraid he will be lost for ever. [Farmer weeps.]

*Mrs. Lit.* Now only see Sir, how mopish and melancholy these new notions in religion have made my husband; though it is a great grief to us both, that Harry should have turned out so badly; yet between that and his religion,---I am afraid at times, he'll lose his senses!

*Dolit.* Indeed Mrs. Littleworth, I am very sorry for your husband; he is a *good hearted man at bottom*. Do you never try to divert him?

*Miss Polly.* Divert him Sir! Why when my uncle and aunt, and two of our cousins came to see us the other day, we always used to have a little *harmless mirth*; and only because my Mother, and Patty, and I proposed to have a game or two of cards, away my Father and sister Nancy ran out of the house, as though it had been on fire; and down they went to Mr. Lovegood's and *said prayers*.

*Far.* Now do Sir hear me patiently. Thus have I lived, "without God in the world," neglectful of my precious soul, and forgetful of Christ my only Savior, till I am turned of sixty. I am ashamed to say what a sinner I have been; and what a bad example my wife and family have had before them.

*Dolit.* Well but Mr. Littleworth, why should you run from one extreme to another? You know the old proverb, "Extremes are dangerous;" and there is moderation in all things; and you know I have a sermon on that text,---Let your moderation be known unto all men."

*Far.* Why Sir, you have been our Justice these fourteen years; and when bad people are brought

before you, I am sure you do much better in your office than to preach up to them such a sort of moderation. You never tell thieves that they should be *moderately honest*; or drunkards, (and the Lord knows we have enough of them,) that they should be *moderately sober*; or the many bad people that throw themselves upon our Parish, for the support of their *base-born* children, that they should be *moderately chaste*; and no such words did I ever hear from your pulpit, as that men should be *moderately moral*. Now if this is not to be allowed in *morality*, how are we to make it out in *religion*, when we are commanded to “love the Lord with *all* our heart, mind, soul, and strength?” Does it mean, that we are to have a *moderate* love to God? and when we are enjoined to love our neighbour as ourselves, does it mean a *moderate* love to mankind? And pray Sir, should I repent *moderately*, pray *moderately*, and have a *moderate* trust in God? If so, I really cannot understand the Scriptures, which say, “that I am to *give diligence*, yes *all* diligence (2 Pet. xv. 20.) to make my calling and election sure;” that religion “is the one thing needful,” for which I am to “forsake *ALL* that I have, that I may be Christ’s disciple;” and that “I must strive (or as Mr Love-good says, it means *agonize*) to enter in at the strait gate.”

*Dolit.* You need not be so critical Sir; I only mean, you shall not be so over-zealous in religion.

*Far.* Why I confess, as I have lately taken to read my Bible, I think it is there said, “It is good to be zealously affected in a good thing.”

*Dolit.* Now this is too bad Mr. Littleworth. Do you not think that I know the Bible as well as you? Ring the bell Miss Polly. I shan’t stop here any longer to be told my duty, when I have been so long Minister of this Parish.

*Far.* Why Sir, I did not know that I was telling you your duty, by mentioning what I have lately found out in my Bible, and only by observing, that I

could not understand your meaning about *moderation* in religion; but if I pressed the point too far, I beg your pardon for it.

*Dolit.* Well Sir, I have before said, I'll keep my temper if I can; but this cannot be done, unless you keep up proper manners while you chuse to talk to me about *your new religion*.

*Far.* Why Sir, as to my new religion as you call it, I do really confess, since I have heard Mr. Lovegood, my thoughts about these matters are wonderfully altered; and I will tell you in the most *mannerly fashion* in my power, how it came about. You know I have an honest fellow works with me, Thomas Newman; and it is to *admiration*, what a sober, orderly, decent, Christian-like man he is! And his wife is the nicest, tidiest woman I ever met with in all my *born* days; and at different times when I talked to him, I found that he had not only religion in his practice, but his Bible *at his finger's ends*. How I was ashamed of my ignorance when I heard him talk! But this made me determine to go hear what sort of a Parson he so much admired; for I remember the time when he was wild enough.

*Dolit.* Truly Mr. Littleworth, it is a fine compliment to me, that you should go to one of your day-laborers to be instructed in religion.

*Far.* Why Sir, if I may be so bold as to say, that though *larning* is a good thing, yet it does not always make a good man; and that a poor man may have the grace of God in his heart, without having much *larning* in his head. And did not our Lord mean something of the same kind when he said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes?"

*Dolit.* And so all the time and money that we have been spending at the University, has been of no sort of service; and every ignorant enthusiast that pretends to inspiration, is to tell us the meaning of the

**Bible:** while they are sure to meet with illiterate gaping fools by hundreds, to run after them.

**Far.** 'Las Sir! did I speak against human *larning*? It is well known that Mr. Lovegood is one of the *larnedest* men for twenty miles round; though I have heard him say, That "human learning, to a man spiritually blind, does no more good than a lighted candle does to a man that is naturally blind:" and I dare say Sir, when you read the Homilies, you remember these words, "*Man's human and worldly wisdom or science, is not needful to the understanding of the Scriptures, but THE REVELATION OF THE HOLY GHOST, which INSPIRETH the true meaning into them that with humility and diligence do search therefor.*"\*---And the Lord grant that I may have a little of that blessed inspiration! for I am sure I need it.

**Dolit.** Now I am sure Mr. Littleworth, you must have misrepresented their words; I never can believe that they wrote so enthusiastically as all that.

**Far.** Now indeed Sir; they are just as fresh, and as *pat* in my memory, as though I had read them but yesterday: and I always thought, and think so still, that no man can make a better prayer, than what you use out of the Common Prayer-book before your Sermon: "Blessed Lord who hath caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ." Now this to my mind, is *next akin* to what is said in the Homilies, and that we ought to pray to God to send the Holy Ghost, who inspireth the true meaning of the Scriptures.

**Dolit.** Why then I am to suppose that Thomas Newman is inspired, and that he can teach you better

\* Homily on reading the Scriptures.

than I can; and that I for want of inspiration, know no more of the Bible than if I were a downright fool: This is a fine way of talking!

*Far.* I don't think you should take me up so harshly in what I have said. But so it really was, that Thomas's good life and talk, made me determine to go and hear Mr. Lovegood; and my daughter Nance went with me; and when I came to the Church, I prayed to the Lord, that as he had made Thomas so good a man, so I might be made a better man: for I am sure there was room for me to mend: and a fine sermon he made, all *off hand*, from those words, "You cannot serve God and Mammon."

*Dolit.* And pray Sir, why could not my sermons, as well as his, have made you a better man? I know that such extemporaneous effusions please ignorant and vulgar minds, that are fond of gaping after novelty; but I am not ashamed of the sound and sober sermons I have been preaching among you, ever since I have been your Rector.

*Far.* Why Sir, did I find fault with you, or any one else? I was only about to tell you how I was struck with Mr. Lovegood's sermon; for I certainly thought he made it all for me: and I actually asked Thomas if he had not been telling him about me. But he declared he could not have been so bold with his Minister against his Master: and then he said to me, that Mr. Lovegood could tell any one's heart from the knowledge he had of his own, and the word of God.

*Dolit.* I suppose then, when all other trades fail, he'll turn *fortune-teller*.

*Far.* I cannot say as to that Sir; though I am sure he told my fortune plain enough that day; for I thought he turned me *inside out*, while he shewed me what a fallen worldly-minded creature I was.

*Dolit.* Yes; and all these preachers run on just in the same way. If any of us step a little aside, we are to hear of nothing but hell and damnation; and for every *innocent* infirmity, man is to be painted



out as black as the Devil.---I cannot bear such *un-charitable* doctrine.

*Miss Polly.* No more can I Sir, and I am sure you must know more about religion than my Father.

*Far.* Why Sir, to my way of thinking, both the Bible and Common Prayer-Book, and the Articles of Religion, just say the same; and they say all you Clergy subscribe to them a many times over before you come to your livings.

*Mrs. Lit.* Yes Sir, and my husband has brought home such a heap of books and prayers from his new *parson*, about the articles and *homicles*, I think he calls them, and Common Prayer-Book: Then he tells us, that his is the old religion of the Church; and he wants to read all these books over to us. He has got a book of prayers made by an old Bishop,\* that he says was of his way of thinking: and he wants us to kneel down, to *say prayers to us*, before we go to bed. But how can we have time for all these devotions in our way of living?

*Dolit.* Why you are very right there Mrs. Littleworth. If you do your duty well on a Sunday and have a family prayer on a Sunday evening; and say some good rational prayers *to yourselves* before you go to bed on a week-day, God Almighty, who is very merciful, and forbids us *to be righteous over-much*, cannot expect more from you in your line of life.

*Miss Polly.* There Father! I hope you will be guided by what Mr. Dolittle says, and not be led so much by your *homicles* and new religion.

*Dolit.* Why Mr. Littleworth, you know I spent many years at the University, and there I'll assure you, I was not inattentive to the study of divinity under Dr. Blunderbuss, a man of approved religion in those days; though since then I have heard of a Mr. Brightman and some others, who have adopted your notions of religion: yet it was not only his opinion, but that of many other learned and orthodox

\* Bishop Hall's Manual.

divines, that though our Reformers were well-meaning men, yet they were not over-wise in religion : and that though religion in the opinion of some, is now less practised, yet it is much more improved. We live in a very learned day : and our Clergy now-a-days, do not confine themselves to a few abstruse notions of those old Divines, but make their sermons out of a variety of the most excellent moral writings that ever were composed, from among those we call heathens, but who had a deal of *the light of nature*, and knew much about *natural religion* ; and they make the Bible much more intelligible. Master Littleworth, if I may give my advice, I would not wish you to be over-nice, nor over-wise in your religion. Do your duty as well as you can ; and if you fail, trust in the Almighty's mercies. The rational Clergy in our day, know very well that there is a new sect, who puzzle people's minds about the terms *original sin*, the *atonement*, *imputed righteousness*, and I know not what notions besides ; which I am sure you need not mind, provided you do your duty without affecting to be more righteous than your neighbours. However Mr. Lovegood may pretend to be wiser than the rest of us ; yet, if you will take our advice according to the Scriptures, and "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God," I am sure you need not fear. To be sure Sir, you have not forgotten my sermon on that text, which I have never failed preaching to you, year by year ever since I was inducted into the living.

*Far.* Ah ! but Sir, that very text cuts me quite up : for first, I confess the many tricks and fibs I have been guilty of at market ; so that I have not done justly : and I have been as bad at mercy ; for I know I love myself better than my poor neighbours : and that made me always agree with Farmer Gripe and others, over a pot of drink ; if the harvest was ever so good, to keep up the price of corn ; and in order to do this, we found a lie would not *choke* us : and then with regard to walking humbly with my

God ; never did any man strut about at market like a *braggadocia* more than I have done : and as to humbling myself before God in prayer, or by repentance ; I was as ignorant of these things as I am of the *larning* of an Oxford *schollard*. As for our articles, homilies, and prayer-book, let *folk* be ever so wise and *larned* now-a-days, they seem to me to have been made by men wonderfully knowing in the Scriptures : for they not only explain to us what hearts we have by nature ; but how mercifully we poor sinners are to be saved, through Jesus Christ our only Redeemer. And it is all laid out to admiration, in a little book given me by Mr. Lovegood, called “ The Good Old Way ;” and it was there that I think I see my picture just as it is in the ninth article, on the Fall of Man ; where it is said in a wonderful wise way, that “ Every man of his own nature, is inclined to evil ; and that every person born into this world, deserves God’s wrath and damnation.”

*Mrs. Lit.* There Sir ; this is the way my husband would be talking, morning, noon, and night, if we chose to hear him, in his uncharitable way, about all of us deserving God’s wrath and damnation.

*Dolit.* But Mr. Littleworth, if we are not quite so good as we should be, in our present *laps’d* state, we may all *make ourselves better if we please*.

*Far.* ’Las Sir ! it appears to me that if this is not to be done till it *pleases us*, in our present wicked corrupted state, it never will be done ; for to my mind, all men naturally “ *chuse* darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil ;” and that no bad man can have a good choice or will, till God changes the heart. And though I cannot say any thing as to the *larning* of the old men that made our Church Books, yet to me it appears sure and certain, as they say in the next article, “ That the condition of man after the fall of Adam, is such, that he *cannot turn and prepare himself* by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God ; wherefore, we have *no power* to do good works pleasant and acceptable to

God, without the grace of God, by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good-will, and working with us when we have that good-will." And though I confess, I have not minded the prayers so much as I should have done; yet I remember having heard you say from the desk, "Almighty God, who seeth we have *no power* of ourselves to help ourselves; and that, through the weakness of our mortal natures, *we can do no good thing* without God; and the frailty of man without God, *cannot but fall*." And I remember when my school-mistress taught me the catechism, she used to say to me, "My good child know this, that thou art *not able* to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and serve him, without his *special grace*."

*Dolit.* But if you take all these words in such a strict sense, you will make us out to be *mere machines*; and then it is no matter what we do, for I am sure there can be no *merit* in our goodness.

*Far.* Why sometimes on a rainy day, Nancy and I go to Brookfield Church in our covered cart; and that is a mere machine: it knows not, neither why nor wherefore it goes to one place more than another; therefore as it has no will of its own, it is driven about by the will of another: but blessed be God! that is not our way of going to work, when we are made "God's willing people in the day of his power." The Lord be praised! we now *willingly act* to his praise and glory, since by his grace he has *acted upon* our hearts. I wonder why it is, that so many of the *clergy* should make it out, as though we were nothing better than a set of wheel-barrows or spinning-wheels. And as to merit, how can there be any merit in such poor services as ours? I cannot help thinking with our *old folk*, in the article of the justification of man, that "We are accounted righteous before God, *by faith, only* for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and *not for our own works or deservings*; wherefore, that we are justified

by *faith ONLY*, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." And then they tell us the same in the homily "of the salvation of mankind only by *Christ our Savior*, in which the doctrine is more largely expressed:" and there they give a *deadly* stroke at our pride in that they say, "Because all men be sinners against God, and breakers of his law, therefore *no man can, by his own acts, works, or deeds, seem they never so good, be justified and made righteous before God*; but every man of necessity is constrained to seek for *another righteousness for justification*: our justification doth come *freely of the mere mercy of God*, so that Christ is now *the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in him*, for he paid the ransom by his death, he for them fulfilled the law in his life." And then Sir, we may say with a good conscience, "O Lord, who seest we put not our trust in any thing that we do." And when I go to the holy Sacrament at Mr. Lovegood's Church; (and I am ashamed to say,) old as I am, to the Sacrament I never went before, excepting twice after I was confirmed; and then we prayed, that God would not "weigh our merits, but pardon our offences;" and here.---[Dolittle interrupts.']

*Dolit.* Stop Mr. Littleworth; before you tell us any more of the prayers, I must tell you, that Mr. Lovegood is liable to a severe ecclesiastical censure for administering the Sacrament to one of my parishioners. And---[Farmer interrupts.]

*Far.* But as old Master Goodenough and Madam Toogood have left Mr. Lovegood's Parish to come to your Sacrament, I dare say you'll forgive them, and I am sure he'll forgive you.

*Miss Polly.* But Sir, my father talks so frivolous and *'thusiastically* about inspiration, and says that the Bishops and all the Clergy have declared, that they were "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost," before they went into orders; and I have heard you preach against such *'thusiasts* again and again. I don't like their religion---that I don't.



*Far.* Ah Polly, you should not talk so *pert* to your Father. When I could bluster about the house as once I did, you did not behave so *unmannerly* then. [To Mr. Dolittle.] But you know Sir, how very often we pray for the Spirit of God in the Prayer-book; "that God would grant us his Holy Spirit;" that he would "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit." We pray for his Majesty, that he may be "replenished with the grace of the Holy Spirit;" and that all the Bishops and Clergy may have "the healthful Spirit of God's grace." And at Christmas time we pray, "that we being regenerate and born again, and made God's children by adoption and grace, may be daily renewed by his Holy Spirit;" and in another collect, that "God would send to us his Holy Ghost to comfort us;" and then in the article of our predestination and election, it is said, that "the elect *feel in themselves the workings of the Spirit of Christ.*" And in the Catechism, that the Holy Spirit "sanctifies us and all the *elect* people of God." And in twenty more places besides, have we the same sort of words and doctrine. And to me, it seems it would be even foolish to pray at all, unless we thought that God would inspire into our hearts the good we pray for.

*Dolit.* Well Master Littleworth, if you have done *preaching* to me, it is high time that I should begin *preaching* to you. I have already observed, that our Reformers were good men, but not over-wise; and that they may have expressed themselves unguardedly; therefore many of our Divines of the present day, and I'll assure you most of them are Bishops or Deans, or other great Dignitaries, have been at a deal of pains to put a proper explanation on their words: and though I confess, they have hardly as yet, settled the matter among themselves, yet it seems to amount to this.---Some of them think, that our Reformers had a *double meaning* in all they said, and that they speak both ways, for and against the same doctrine, at the same time. Others are of opinion,

that they had but one meaning, which is to be understood *just the contrary to what they say*. They who are for the *double meaning* suppose, that while some are at liberty to take them in *one sense*, yet others are at liberty also to take them *in the opposite sense* : and though, to the ignorant and the unlearned, this may appear a flat contradiction and nonsense, yet many learned Divines have written very ably on this side of the question : though I confess, in my opinion it gives too much latitude to those modern preachers that you are now so fond of, to preach up their notions ; and very specious things to be sure they have to say, if we let this interpretation pass. I am rather therefore of the opinion of those Divines, who have proved that our Reformers, when *they said one thing meant another*. And if you please Sir, I'll explain myself on this subject.

*Far.* 'Las Sir ! you quite stagger me : I do'nt know whether I stand upon my head or my heels.

*Dolit.* Don't say so Sir, for I'll assure you we are serious ; and we can prove all this to be very true from the logic some of us brought from Oxford, and others of us from Cambridge. And thus, when we read in the article about "original, or birth-sin, that it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is *very far*\* gone from original righteousness ;" it is evidently to be made out by *the rule of reverse* : therefore according to the opinion of our modern Divines, there is a deal of original inherent rectitude in man, if he would but employ his reason, and his conscience, to bring it forth ; and——

*Far.* [interrupts.] Though I dare not contradict the *larned*, yet I am sure my hardened conscience and my blinded reason never did me any good.

*Dolit.* You should not have interrupted me Sir, till I had reminded you of what you said about "special grace ;" that we have "no power of ourselves, to help

\* In the original Latin, *quam longissime, as far as possible*.

ourselves," and therefore "of ourselves we cannot but fall;" that "we have no power to do works pleasant and acceptable to God without the grace of God by Christ preventing us:" now for want of *our logic*, it cannot be expected you can comprehend that these expressions are to be understood by the same *rule of reverse*: and that *now* their proper meaning is, that there is a deal of power left in us, though in our lapsed state; and that nothing is wanting, but for God to *second* our good endeavours; and that through our own proper resolutions and endeavours, if duly attended to, we shall obtain the favor of the Almighty.

*Far.* Why then Sir, when I tell Sam to go and saddle me the horse, that I may ride to Mapleton, he is to understand that he is to take off the saddle and turn the horse out in the field. Why, I am all in amazement at this new sort of *larning*.

*Mrs. Little.* Nancy my dear, hand that fresh toast to Mr. Dolittle. [To Mr. Dolittle.] Perhaps Sir, you would like a bit more with your last dish.

*Nancy.* Why mother, begging Mr. Dolittle's pardon, according to his doctrine I must go and lock it up in the pantry---shall I go mother?

*Mrs. Little.* Why child, how you talk?

*Nancy.* Why mother, according as my father says, this is the right way to act by this new rule of reverse.

*Miss Polly.* Nancy, how can you dare to talk so impudently to our Rector?

*Nancy.* I did not mean to be impudent to the Rector in agreeing with my father. [Miss Patty immediately hands the toast, informing him that the butter was fresh churned that very morning.]

*Dolit.* [Takes a piece.] Thank you Miss---but we are not to adopt this rule of reverse in things *temporal*, but only in things *spiritual*. It is upon this principle, that our Divines have it in their power further to prove, the justification of man by *faith alone*, that it means by *faith and good works together*;

nor should you pretend to be so wise about the matter, but humbly to leave it to your Clergy, and believe as they direct you; for it should seem very strange, that after those abstruse Divines have puzzled even the most learned among us of modern times, about the difference of “works done before justification, and works done after justification,” that you should be able to understand them.

*Far.* Why then Sir, when I say I shall go alone to Mapleton market next Thursday, you are to understand that I mean to take my Wife and daughter Polly with me. Is this the way in which I am to *chop* this *new-fashioned* logic? But I remember when young Parson Lightman, the lawyer’s brother, stepped in the other day and found me reading one of our old Church books, he said, he did not trouble himself about their meaning; for that they were all advised to take them in the sense the Church-governors put upon them; and that as it could not be supposed they could understand such difficult points when they were young, they should first subscribe to them, and then consider whether they were true or false afterwards.

*Dolit.* I entirely agree with Mr. Lightman, that it is quite proper that young men should pretend to be so over-wise, but I am very sorry for you Mr. Littleworth if you cannot understand, yet you should submit to the learning of our University Divines. I fear you will never be reclaimed, for you mentioned also among other subjects, the article upon “our predestination and election.” Now all our learned Divines can prove, that that article also, is to be understood in a sense which is directly contrary to its plain meaning; and that, when it is said, “The godly consideration of our predestination in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the

\* This was the popular evasion when I was at the University.



workings of the Spirit of Christ ;" it means, that it was a very ungodly doctrine, and calculated to encourage the most licentious conduct : that the words " sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort," now mean every thing that is abominably detestable and odious, and only held forth by a modern sect, now sunk into general execration. In short, that the predestination of some, means an universal *chance* given to all. And further still, when it is said, " that the elect of God feel in themselves the workings of the Spirit of Christ," we are to understand, that there are no such feelings or influences ; or that if there are, according to an expression which we are very fond of using, they must be secret and *imperceptible* feelings.

*Far.* 'Las Sir ! where am I ? Secret and imperceptible feelings !---[Farmer to his wife.] Why Dame, when our son Harry would be so wild, and when he went to sea, and you and I used to sob and cry together night after night, ours were not imperceptible feelings. [To Mr. Dolittle.] And when we repent of sin, for I am sure we have enough of it, are we to have *imperceptible* repentance ; and when we tell God our wants in prayer, are those to be *imperceptible* wants ? Are we to have *imperceptible* love to God ? and *imperceptible* faith in Christ ? I should wish to have something better than an *imperceptible* religion ; otherwise I fear I shall have nothing better than an *imperceptible* Heaven. Really Sir, I am in such amaze by these new notions, that I know not where I am. But as you say, I am to understand all our *old folk* by the rule of reverse, perhaps I am to understand you by the same rule, and that will turn all matters *right round*.

*Dolit.* Master Littleworth, it is very improper in you to banter us by such language ; you know how many people there are against *our religion* already : First, Dissenters of every party are saying that we subscribe a creed for the sake of our livings, which we never examined or believed. But who



would mind what these *Schismatics* have to say against us ? for all the infidels say just the same ; and as for the new sect that you have lately taken to follow, they are in my opinion worse *Schismatics* than any of them.

*Far.* Well to my mind that is wonderfully strange, that Mr. Lovegood should be a Schismatic, when he is shewing us almost in every sermon, how the Bible and our old Church-books agree with each other : but it is a hard word I don't properly understand.

*Dolit.* Why then Sir, as you are one of the Church-wardens, you ought to know that a man that runs *galloping* away from his own Parish Church after such whimsical preachers, is almost as bad a Schismatic as he that goes to a meeting-house, being directly contrary to our Ecclesiastical laws.

*Far.* But 'Squire Massman, the Roman Catholic gentleman, has been putting out some books, to shew that all Church-folk are Schismatics because they differ from their Church, which is the only true Church. I can't see how a good man can be a bad man because he goes where he gets most good for his soul ; and I remember once Mr. Lovegood told us, while he was expounding that schism meant an unchristian turbulent dividing spirit among different Christian societies, and among each other, and the Lord deliver us all from such a spirit as that ! But when old Father Canting, one of the 'Squire's Priests called on me with one of his books ; what you and he said about schism was just the same.

*Dolit.* I suppose then Sir, you mean next to make me as bad as a Roman Catholic.

*Far.* Why Sir, the truth is this : though I pretend to nothing but what belongs to every man of natural plain common sense ; I must confess, since I have heard Mr. Lovegood, that he really loves the Church doctrines much better than many of his accusers ; and that I wonder so many of you gentlemen should again and again subscribe to all these things, as though you had a right to understand them in a sens

just opposite to their real sense, and thus make nonsense of the whole of it; while you subscribe them as being "articles agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops, and all the Clergy," for "avoiding diversity of of opinions;" and "for the establishment of *consent* touching religion;" and which you say are to be taken in *the literal and grammatical sense*. Aye Sir! and run down those Ministers whose hands and hearts go together, and who will have nothing to do with those double meanings, and double dealings, so contrary to all the common-sense meaning of words, as that all we farmer-like *countryfied* folk, cannot but see how little agreement there is between hands and hearts in all these subscriptions. Lord help us! is this the simplicity and godly sincerity of the upright Christian.

*Dolit.* O Sir! you seem to be struck with the spirit of devotion; you'll go to prayer with us next.

*Far.* Oh no Sir! I would rather leave that with you. Nancy my child, reach Mr. Dolittle the Bible; it will be more profitable to us all, if he reads a Chapter, and expounds it, and goes to prayer with us, and that is the way Mr. Lovegood does when he goes a visiting.

*Dolit.* [in a rage.] I have been now Rector of this Parish above these nineteen years, and I never was addressed about going to prayer in such a manner before. Sir, this rude treatment compels me to leave your house immediately.---Mrs. Littleworth, I wish you a good night.---Young ladies, your humble servant.

## DIALOGUE VII.

ON THE EVIL NATURE AND TENDENCY OF STAGE  
EXHIBITIONS.

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FARMER LITTLEWORTH; MR. BRISK, MR. DOLITTLE'S  
CURATE; MR. SMIRKING, ASSISTANT TO DR.  
DRONISH; AND THE FARMER'S FAMILY.

BY the former Dialogue it was made to appear, that the Farmer was a match for most of his antagonists. By the grace that reigned in his heart, his mind was rendered attentive and considerate: and thereby he became capable of giving a reason for the hope that was in him; in a manner that was not easily to be contradicted by the different opponents, and of this a further evidence shall next be laid before the reader.

It was not long after the farmer's conversation with Rector Dolittle, that the following event took place.

One evening, when it began to get late, Sam the Farmer's foot-boy came home from Mapleton rather late, after an affray at a public house; Miss Nancy brings in the information.

*Miss Nancy.* Father, here is Sam come home from Mapleton, with such a bruised face, bloody handkerchief, and his livery all over dirt. He appears to be half drunk: and the lantern is broken all to bits.

*Far.* What can he have been at? Why don't he come in?

*Nancy.* He is only stopping to scrape off some of the dirt, and to wash himself in the back kitchen.

[Sam comes in.]

*Far.* Why Sam! in the name of wonder where have you been, to come home in this condition?

*Sam.* O Master! if you will forgive me, I'll tell you all about it.

*Far.* Forgive you,---why what have you been doing? Tell the truth first, and after that, I'll tell you whether or not I shall forgive you.

*Sam.* Why Master, when my young Mistresses were at Mr. Lightman's the lawyer at tea, in came Mr. Brisk and Mr. Smirking, and made an agreement that they should all go to the play.

*Far.* Aye; I thought by their whispering and dressings, that they had some such project in their heads. But how came you in such a pickle young man?

*Sam.* Sir, my young Mistress gave me sixpence to go to the Nag's Head, that I might not stand out in the cold, while they were all at the play; and there 'Squire Bluster's footman, and Lord Rakish's gentleman, did nothing but *jeer* my young Mistresses, by asking, which they understood best, dancing or churning? And then they sneer'd and jeer'd at their dress.

*Far.* Why did you not let them sneer and jeer on, and go away about your business?

*Sam.* Why I thought I must stop and spend my sixpence. And then they began their *romance* on me, and asked how many more of the plough-boys the farmer had put in livery? And I said to them, *as how*, they might have been plough-boys once, as well as I. Then they swore desperate oaths at me, and would make me drink; and said I should run the gauntlet; then they knocked me down; and as soon as I could, I ran away as fast as I was able; but they followed me into the street, and would bring

me back again, but I would not come, so they rolled me in the dirt, and beat me sadly; and the whole street was in an uproar; and the lantern was broke all to *smash*.

*Far.* Ah Sam! the devil is a hard master, and he pays his servants *desperate* bad wages. The Lord change thy wicked heart! [To his daughter.] But Nancy my child; what a mercy from God it is, that we are not in "the broad way that leadeth unto destruction:" I am afraid these stage-play *blades* will be the *ruination* of our Parish.

*Nancy.* A mercy indeed father! for till we went to hear Mr. Lovegood, we were all alike. The Lord be praised for his grace! I thought with you, my sisters had some schemes in hand; for Mr. Lightman's clerk threw a note into the dairy window, when Polly was there this morning to weigh the butter and turn the cheese; but they never tell me any of their secrets now.

[After some conversation, the two ministers and the daughters came in.]

*Brisk.* Well Sir, we have brought home your daughters quite safe and sound; though I am afraid it is a little later than your usual time for supper and bed.

*Far.* Oh no Sir; for sometimes I come home almost as late as this, when I come from the lecture at Mr. Lovegood's Church. And *for sure*, my daughters can have been in no bad ways, when they have been with gentlemen of your cloth; though Sam has told me a strange story.

*Brisk.* Why I confess, Mr. Littleworth, it was I that persuaded your daughters to go to the play. I am sure it is a very innocent and rational amusement.

*Far.* I can't thank you for that Sir; for while you were at the play-house, Sam and ever so many other loose servants were at the alehouse; and he was obliged to come home before you.---And in a fine trim he was.







### RETURN FROM THE PLAY.

*Farmer.*—Pray, Gentlemen, did you ask a blessing before you went to the play, and took my daughters with you?

*Mr. Smirking.*—Why, Sir, how came that thought into your head?

*Farmer.*—I had it from the Bible.

*Miss Polly.*—Nothing now goes down with my father but the Bible; for morning, noon, and night, he is always at it. Breakfast, dinner, and supper, he must have his Bible; he seems Bible mad.

*Farmer.*—You see, Gentlemen, my daughter has brought home no great deal of mannerly, or christian-like behaviour to her father, by going with you to the play to-night.

*Miss Polly.* But Father, mayn't the gentlemen have a bit of supper for their kindness in bringing us home?

*Far.* Aye Aye child, I have no objection against that. [To his wife.] Dame, see what there is in the pantry. Nancy, help your mother to bring it out. [It is done accordingly.]

*Far.* Will one of you gentlemen ask a blessing.

[Mr. Brisk says a careless grace.]

*Far.* And pray gentlemen, did you ask a blessing before you went to the play, and took my daughters with you; and can you return thanks to God now you are come away? for "in every thing we should give thanks."

*Smir.* Why Sir, how came that thought into your head?

*Far.* I had it from the Bible. And for sure, you gentlemen can't be so ignorant of that book, as not to know, that you Ministers are directed to "give yourselves continually unto prayer." And that all of us should "pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit;" that we should "continue instant in prayer;" yea, that we should "pray without ceasing."

*Smir.* But Sir, if you take these texts in so *strict* a sense, how is the business of the world to be carried on?

*Far.* Why the sense in which I take these words is, that we should live in such a holy habit and frame of mind, as to be at all times in a fit state for prayer; and that we can be looking up to God in frequent prayer while we are at our daily labor. This I trust I can now do while I am walking about the farm as well as in Brookfield Church. And I am sure, when this is more generally the case, the world will go on a thousand times better than it does now.

*Brisk.* Well Sir, such a frame of mind is not amiss, especially *at the latter end of our lives.*

*Far.* However you gentlemen would advise us to put off these things till the latter end of our lives,

while God's word directs us to "be always ready;" yet you Ministers are instructed to give "yourselves wholly to these things, that your profiting may appear unto all men." Now pray Sir, if any of the people had been taken with death, and had sent for you to pray with them, and to administer the holy sacrament to them, how would you have felt in your devotions, after having heard so much of the profane stuff and nonsense they talk over at these plays? What sort of prayers would your's have been? Could you have drawn "near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," before a holy God?

*Smir.* I must leave you Mr. Brisk, to answer that question; for being co-pastor with Dr. Dronish, among the *rational Dissenters*, we are not in the habit of being called upon on these occasions; but these things should be no bar against a candid and liberal intercourse with each other; for in all the principal points of religion we seem very well agreed: nothing would be so *ungentleman-like* as to raise disputes on points like these.

*Brisk.* Why Mr. Littleworth, that is not a probable case.

*Far.* But in my opinion, it is a very probable case. And I did hear of one Minister who was called out of a Puppet-Shew, where he went to see a set of dancing dolls, to go to prayer with a man who was likely to die; and in every Parish there must always be some who are sick and near their end. If you are not sent for oftener than you are, it is because your negligence has made them as careless as yourselves, even to their dying moments; and no wonder that they think so little of the prayers of such Ministers who pray so little for themselves.

*Smir.* Mr. Brisk, I believe we had better walk home, for Mr. Littleworth seems quite angry.

*Far.* No no gentlemen, I am not angry; though I confess I am grieved at heart that my daughters should have been led to such places by gentlemen of your profession, where I am sure, they could get

nothing but wickedness : and this I too well know, by sad experience, since it has pleased God to change my heart. I always was hospitable to my neighbours, as far as our plain way of living goes ; and you are quite welcome to stop, and I wish you would, that we may talk over matters before my daughters ; for to speak plainly, your example hardens them much in their vain ways : and there it was, my poor Harry first met with his ruin.

*Smir.* Why truly Sir, I thank you for your civility, but I think, from the dreary notions of religion you have lately adopted, you have taken up such high prejudices against plays, as are not just ; for in many plays, there are fine lessons of morality, if we would but attend to them.

*Far.* Ah, and they are all the worse for that,, as it makes the wicked things in them go down the more *glib*. And then we suppose we have a licence to hear all the foolish and lewd stories, and blasphemous romances, because they are *messed up* with a little morality. Pray Sir, do the people that go to those places, go after religion and morality, or after vanity and fleshly mirth ?

*Brisk.* Why Sir, we go after a little innocent amusement to be sure. And if we do hear of bad things we need not practise them.

*Far.* But do they, whose hearts are good and upright, think that they are at liberty to go after things that are bad ? Or if I hear things which are bad, is that likely to make me good ? Besides, I am directed to " cease to hear the instruction that causeth us to err." Pray did either of you gentleman ever find that wicked people at any time, were made more moral by following these loose fellows, who go romancing about the country with their plays and morality ?

*Smir.* I do not know that we have. But they might have been the better, if they would ; for I still maintain it, that there are plays which contain excellent *strokes* of morality.



*Far.* Well, if I am to go after their nonsense and ribaldry for the sake of their morality, I might also expect to be made a better man, if I should hire some wicked reprobate to curse and blaspheme, and use all manner of filthy foolish talk, made up of lewdness, craft, and pride, provided I had one of you gentleman at my elbow, to give me a little of your morality at the same time. But I should be glad to hear, by what law we go, when we attend such abominable pastimes, and use such wicked language.---Have either of you gentleman any right to tell us a set of vain, filthy, romancing stories, and every now and then bring out a shocking oath, and then *mess it up* with a little morality for our instruction?

*Smir.* Oh no Mr. Littleworth! we did not say so.

*Far.* Why then, did you do right in hiring all these loose *blades* to do it before you?

*Brisk.* Sir this is very uncharitable; for if they said these bad words, we did not hire them for that purpose.

*Far.* Yes; but you know they would come in with the general bargain; and all the profane, foolish people, up and down the country, were there to hear them. And how must this harden them in their sins, when they saw so many Ministers with them at their wretched sport? So that I am sorry to tell you, (for I am an old man and must speak the truth,) you have been "sitting in the seat of the scornful, and attending the councils of the ungodly;" and the Lord help me! how grieved I am that my daughters, whom I brought up in such a vain way, in my' thoughtless state, should have been with you!

*Smir.* By your account Sir, one would think these men do nothing but curse and swear *all* the time.

*Far.* Pray Sir, do they curse and swear *any* of the time?

*Smir.* Yes; I confess, I now and then hear some such expressions. But then they are only meant as

embellishments ; and after all, with a moral intent to expose the wickedness of such words.

*Far.* Expose such wickedness !---Why what can give it such countenance, when all the people round about come together ; while *Gentlefolk*, Justices, and Parsons, attend all the time giggling and laughing while such oaths are swearing. But what did you mean Sir, by '*bellishments*' ? I did not understand that hard word.

*Smir.* Sir, I meant ornaments.

*Far.* Well this is to admiration, that oaths are ornaments ! But you say these are sworn but now and then ;---so you think we may go to places where people swear but a little. Now to my way of thinking, we should be in no company but with such as mind our Lord's words, "Swear not at all."

*Brisk.* Why if ever they do swear, they always cover it very decently ; they only say *damme*, *e'gad-zounds*, and such sort of words.---And they mean nothing by it.

*Far.* Why that they mean nothing by the whole of it, (for it is nothing better than a pack of *make-believe* nonsense,) there is no doubt. But you Clergy know, that "taking the Lord's name in vain," means the making use of his holy name in a vain manner.---And I am sure it cannot be done in a *vainer* manner than it is done on the stage ; especially in their profane mock devotions, even upon their knees, which are ten thousand times more blasphemous than their oaths.

*Smir.* Well I confess I wish they would lay aside such exclamations ; for these sort of amusements would be quite as good and rational without them. But where is the harm of the word *zounds* ? it is a word without any meaning.

*Far.* To be sure that is a famous excuse for them ; for all their words, in a sense, are words without meaning : but the word *zounds*, as I have been told, is a most desperate profane oath indeed.---It means, *by God's wounds* ; and I thought *for sure*, you gen-

tlemen had sufficient *larning* to have known as much as that.

*Smir.* O Sir! it is only an old expression, invented in the times of popery, when people believed in the Divinity of our Saviour, and the Atonement:---but these doctrines are now universally exploded among the *rational* Dissenters. And you know Mr. Brisk, some of the Clergy also are of our sentiment in regard to these points.

*Far.* The infidel Dissenters you mean Sir.

*Miss Polly.* L---d father, how you talk! Surely Mr. Smirking will be affronted.

*Far.* Ah my child! I find you have not been to that wicked school for nothing; for so many times as I have told you of it, yet you still take "the Lord's name in vain." But I'll warrant it was what you heard many and many times over, while you were at the play to-night.

*Smir.* Well Sir, I cannot see that we should give up the fine sentiments that are generally held out on these occasions; I still maintain it, that the stage, when properly conducted, is a very rational amusement.

*Far.* In my vain days, when I attended these places, I know not what I, or any one else, went there for, unless to make game, and to *kill time*, as we most wickedly used to call it. The Lord knows, that bad I went there, and worse I am sure, I came away; for as to all the wicked things I heard there, they stuck to my heart like burrs to my worsted stockings; and as to the morality, that all ran off as fast as it came on, like fair water from a duck's back.

*Smir.* O! but then you did not consider the proper intent of them; for they are designed to shew the deformity of vice, and lash the follies of mankind.

*Far.* Well in all my *born* days I never heard any thing like that before! that these strolling, off-hand blades, should be wanted to teach us the deformity

of vice, as though people were so ignorant and wicked, as not to know that before. And as to lashing the follies of mankind, I thought it was the office of you Ministers to attend to that; and it is a pity that you should want a set of strolling players to help you out in reforming your neighbours. But can either of you gentlemen, in your consciences think so? When vicious people get exposed and lashed, they are ashamed to face it out; they will never stand their ground.' But where do all these sort of people run to? Why to the play-house. And what do they go there for? Because it feeds and pampers their vanity and pride, while they make a downright *merriment* of sin. And as to the stories they trump up on these occasions, it is wonderful that any modest woman will go to hear them. I am ashamed to think how many different lewd tricks and projects I have heard from them, dressed up almost in every shape. In short, nothing is such *nuts* for them as that which sets them all a laughing at adultery and whoredom. Thus, "fools make a mock at sin;" and it is a pity such gentlemen as you should "follow the multitude to do evil."

*Mrs. Lit.* Why, though I don't like my husband being so over-religious, yet I cannot but agree with him, that it would be much better if our daughters would but stay at home and mind their business, and not waste their time in running after such *wonderments*. I do not think my son Harry would have turned out so bad, if he could have been kept away from such sort of company.

*Far.* Ah! that was one of the first things which brought on the *ruination* of my boy. It was there he got instructed in all the wicked ways of the world, and after that, he would have those idle loose *blades* as his companions, whenever he could get at them; and being so ignorant and careless myself, as I then was, I could not have the face to correct him. Oh how I deserve the punishment of old Eli! For "my son made himself vile, and I restrained him not."---

Lord forgive me, and grant that I may once more see him back again from sea ! I hope to the Lord, that I may be able to say something to him for his good, and may God change his heart. (The Farmer was so much affected that a short silence took place : during that interval Miss Patty stepped out, and soon after returned.)

*Patty.* Mother, have you got the key of the back pantry ? for Sam is terribly bruised, and we are going to bathe his cheeks and side with some hot verjuice. [Mrs. Littleworth gives the key.]

*Far.* Now all this riot and wickedness comes of these abominable pastimes, whether out of doors or in, it is just as bad ; nothing but uproar and confusion all the town over. While every 'prentice and servant man and maid is tempted to run away from the families to which they belong ; and then away they go to these schools of wickedness, and come home at dark night, fit for the practice of every abominable vice that comes in their way. Thus business is neglected, the common people are robbed both of their morals and their money, while the pawnbroker and alehouse-keeper live on the spoil. And these are your innocent amusements gentlemen. (Here the ministers look a little crest-fallen, but afterwards return to the charge.)

*Smir.* Now after all that you have said, bad people will make a bad use of every thing : but that does not prove things to be bad in themselves.

*Brisk.* I am quite of your opinion, Mr. Smirking, for there is nothing against these things in Scripture ; nay, there is a time for all things, even a time to dance ; and we should regard the Scriptures.

*Far.* With all my heart Sir, I hope we shall all be glad to come to that touchstone. We are commanded to search the Scriptures.---Patty, reach the Bible.

*Patty.* Why Father, the gentlemen have scarce done supper ; you cannot want the Bible yet.

*Far.* Nay, nay girl, we have been talking all the



time, as most people do over their meals, and talking about religion won't *choke* us any more than about politics and the world.

*Smir.* We have both done supper Sir, and it begins to be late.

*Far.* It is not wholesome to rise so soon after meals ; and you love a glas of wine after supper. (To Mrs. Littleworth.) Dame, reach us a nice bottle of your best currant wine. (To Mr. Smirking) Sir, gentlemen in your way love a pipe. Shall Patty bring you one ?

*Smir.* No I thank you Sir ; it begins to be late.

*Far.* Why ! surely you gentlemen won't be frightened out of the house at the sight of the Bible. Nancy, bring it quick. Now snuff the candles ; fetch me my spectacles, and let us see. (Nancy brings it.)

*Nancy.* Father, I can shew all the places we turned down, which Mr. Lovegood made use of when he preached against these wickednesses, the Sunday before last.

*Far.* Well then, let us see : Here is Eph. iv. 29. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers." [To the Ministers]---Did the play run in that style to-night, gentlemen ?

*Brisk.* Go on Sir ; we will answer you by and by.

*Far.* Why then it is said, "That for every idle word men shall speak they shall give an account in the day of judgment." Why Nancy, it would not do for you and I to die in a play-house, for there is nothing else but idle words there. And I have not forgotten reading some time ago, how many of these poor thoughtless creatures lost their lives in the midst of their sinful merriments, while they were stamping and roaring away, singing one of their foolish songs ; they felt the floor under them beginning to give way, and we all remember how many of them lost their lives as

they attempted to escape, being trampled and smothered to death.

*Brisk.* To be sure that was a terrible calamity, but such accidents may happen.

*Far.* But is it not wise to keep out of harm's way, lest it should happen to us. And if you had been the Minister of the Parish, how would you have liked to have said over their graves, "we give thee hearty thanks that it has pleased thee to deliver this our Brother out of the miseries of this sinful world?" and what warrant could you have had out of the Bible respecting the rest of their immortal souls, "as our hope is this our brother doth?"

[Mr. Brisk to Mr. Smirking.] We had better be going Mr. Smirking.

*Far.* I beg gentlemen you will stop and hear a few more places we marked down in the Bible. [To Miss Nancy.] Let me see Nancy; the next place is where we are forbidden "foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient." And there we have nothing else but foolish talking and jesting all the way through; aye, and if possible, worse still; for if they present us with any good, they are almost sure to make a scoff at it; and as for pride, anger, revenge, and such like passions, these they dress up in such a manner as though there was little or no evil in them, and as though nobody could live without them.---In a thousand instances they represent virtue to be vice, and vice to be virtue; or it would not be so pleasing to those sort of customers who attend them. After this, you know, Mr. Lovegood mentioned that text against "profane and vain babblings;" and their babblings are profane enough I am sure; and these we are "to avoid." And here it is again, "Let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ." And here again, "Our conversation is in heaven;" and I am sure I never used to think of heaven when I was at the play-house.

*Nancy.* And you know Father, it is said, "that

the righteous soul of Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked." And I am sure, in all the plays that you and I have seen, there is enough of "the filthy conversation of the wicked."

*Far.* But Nancy, we must not forget that text which pins it all down to a point, which Mr. Lovegood explained to us against these abominable doings, in Gal. v. 19---22, in which, after a long list of wickednesses forbidden to all Christians, "revellings, and such like," are mentioned; and these are again forbidden, 1 Pet. iv. 3. Now Mr. Lovegood tells us they meant masked dances and songs, which were in use among the heathen, much after the fashion of our plays; which are for the entertainment of us *Christians*, as we are called. And then you know, he told us that all horse-racings, bull-baitings, useless fairs and wakes, cock-fightings and dancings, were all of them revels. And again he observed, that midnight revels were the worst sort of revels, because it gave a more convenient opportunity to sons of darkness, to practise their "works of darkness." And we all know what sort of *innocent* amusements people are sure to have among themselves at these times, cursing, swearing, fighting, whoring, drunkenness, and every other abominable evil. Fine sort of sights these, for Ministers to attend. Gentlemen, have you had supper enough?

*Ministers.* No more we thank you Sir. But we must be moving.

*Far.* Why, for sure I thought you Ministers would be kept the longer if the Bible was fetched. You have been entertained near three hours at the play; we should, at least, pass one hour's entertainment over the Bible.---Patty, take away every thing but the Bible. Now gentlemen, can you shew us any places in the Scripture which countenances your sort of proceedings?

*Brisk.* Why did I not mention that the Scriptures say, there is a time to dance? And did not David dance before the ark?

*Far.* Yes ; and he danced with holy joy before the Lord, praising and blessing his name all the time ; quite in a rapture of thanksgiving for his great mercies to Israel. Surely you won't compare your sort of dancings to that of David, for in your's God is quite forgotten, and thrust out of the question, that all of you may make merry in sin.

*Smir.* But then Sir, we are forbidden to be " righteous over-much."

*Miss Polly.* There Father, I am sure that is as much to the point as any of your texts.

*Far.* Aye and many a drunken, worldly-minded Farmer and grazier, has told me of that text, especially of late. As though the Lord was afraid that we poor sinful creatures, might be too righteous and too holy ;---lest we should repent too much ; pray too much ; or love God too much. Now though I am but a country Farmer, yet I can give you a *properer* meaning to it than that, if ever you chuse to make a sermon on it. For it means, don't be too rigorous and over severe in your judgment and dealings with your fellow creatures ; but let mercy and forbearance be mixed with judgment. I think this sounds more consistent, than to suppose, that a most righteous God should forbid us to be over-righteous. And would not such notions make the Bible appear to be all contradiction and nonsense ? while we are commanded in that blessed book, to be " holy in all manner of conversation ;" to " perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord ;" and to " be perfect, even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect."

*Smir.* I suppose Mr. Littleworth, you are frequently going down to Mr. Lovegood's for fresh *lectures in Divinity*, for you can quite out-do us in quoting Scripture.

*Far.* O yes Sir, I am with him as often as my business will permit ; and when I heard him the Sunday before last, preach such a brave sermon as he did against this ribaldry, that you gentlemen have been supporting ; I remember he told us, how much

such *farcial* nonsenses were against the spirit and temper of real Christianity. [To his daughter.] Nancy my child, you know we marked down his proof texts on that head also, as soon as we came home. Let us see which they were.

*Nancy.* Why the first text was this. "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service; and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God." And he asked, where could be the Christianity of those who were entirely conformed to the world, and who ran after all its vanities; and were "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God?"

*Far.* Yes my child, and these are the people that fill the play-house; and then you know, he brought out these texts: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence," &c. "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;" for "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." Now pray young gentlemen, to be plain with you, though you are so much more *larneder* than I am, is it possible for any one to be more in friendship with the world than you are? And is it possible, that they who attend where you have been to-night, can be among "the pure in heart," who unfeignedly say, "lead us not into temptation?" and who "watch and pray lest they should enter into temptation," when they seem to tempt the very devil to tempt them?

*Mrs. Lit.* I am sadly afraid gentlemen, my husband bears a little too hard upon you. Let me give you another glass of wine.

*Smir.* Thank you Madam, but we are in no great fear of an answer, after Mr. Littleworth has brought out all his texts.



*Miss Polly.* I am afraid that will be a long time first; for nothing now goes down with my Father but the Bible. For morning, noon, and night, he is always at it; breakfast, dinner, and supper, he must have his Bible. He seems Bible mad.

*Far.* You see gentlemen, my daughter has brought home no great deal of mannerly or Christian-like behavior to her Father, by going with you to the play to-night. We will however, bring a few more texts to confirm our point; for pray, when you were with all the giggling thoughtless set that were at the play, were you with those who were "heavenly minded, and spiritually minded:" who "were led by the Spirit;" who had "the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which was given them," who were "giving all diligence before God to make their calling and election sure, lest a promise being left to enter into his rest, any of them should seem to come short;" who were "striving to enter in at the strait gate;" who were "working out their salvation with fear and trembling;" who were "crucified to the world; who were even dead to it; whose lives were hid with Christ in God;" and who have "Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith." Were you among those who are panting after God; who are "hungering and thirsting after righteousness;" who are "pressing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" who are "redeeming the time, because the days are evil;" who are "through the Spirit, mortifying the deeds of the body;" who are "blameless and harmless, the sons of God;" who "let their light shine before men, that they may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven?" Were you among those who, "in whatsoever they do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by him;" and who likewise, "whether they eat, or whether they drink, or whatsoever they do, do all to the glory of God?" If so, you have all been at the play to the glory of

God. Now gentlemen, this is not the hundredth part of the Bible against such loose amusements ; and the Lord make you sensible *what* you should be, and then you will know *where* you should be, and *what* you should do ; aye and a little further how you should preach.

*Smir.* Well Sir, if you admire nothing else in us, at least you should admire our patience to hear you say so much ; and after all, nothing to the purpose ; for all these texts were, only designed for primitive times.---Where will you find Christians in these days of such a stamp, excepting a few narrow-minded people of Mr. Lovegood's cast.

*Far.* And so truly the Bible is to be no more to us now-a-days, than an old Almanack.---Mr. Brisk can't you help Mr. Smirking out, by some proper texts of Scripture to prove his point. Here's the Bible for you Sir.

*Brisk.* It cannot be expected that my recollection should be sufficiently clear, having but just come from the play.

*Far.* No wonder that going to the play should have *thicken'd* your senses in regard to the Bible ; but to my mind, it should seem very odd that time should alter the mind of God, and that what was necessary, in a way of holiness a thousand years ago, is not necessary now : and if we go on as we have done of late, in about five hundred years longer, even by the approbation of God himself, men may be devils outright. Why gentlemen, where have you been for such a doctrine as this ? According to this rate, the Bible is nothing better than an old lease that is now run out, and whose covenants and agreements can no longer bind : and if this be the case, how are we to come at the truth ? And who is to draw us out a new rule for the present times ? I am afraid, if done according to the fashion of the times, it will be a *desperate* wide one. Well gentlemen, till you can shew me a reason to the contrary, I shall always suppose, that that good old book is the standard for

my faith and practice; and as God cannot alter in himself, so he cannot alter in that holy word of his, which he has given us to make us "wise unto salvation."

*Smir.* Though I like your arguments very well Mr. Brisk, of taking these texts and putting them up out of the way of some modern enthusiasts, by confining them to primitive times, (which are certainly very *hard to be understood*, as we *practise* Christianity in the present day,) yet I think, the same business is better accomplished among *rational* Dissenters, by calling them strong *eastern* expressions, and representing them as abstruse metaphors; that "being born again," or "being new creatures," only means being brought from the old Jewish religion into the Christian, which was then a new one. And being "led by the Spirit," only means, *led by a good disposition*. And as for all these other strong expressions that Mr. Littleworth seems so fond of, they now only mean, that *we Christians*, should not be remiss in the sober practice of virtue and morality.

*Far.* Now gentlemen, if you wish me to believe all this, you must furnish me with a new set of brains; for shattered as my poor old brains are, I can still understand that two and two make four, with all your *larning*, that when the Bible says one thing, it means another, I can see no sense in it, if we are not to take it as we read it. It was but about three weeks ago that Mr. Dolittle was here, and then I was to believe, that all our good old church books were to be understood according to a double meaning, for and against, or contrary to their meaning. And now all that the Bible *means* is *to mean nothing*. Do any of us think that we are at liberty, after the same fashion, to explain away a book of man's making as we explain away the book of God's making. And now gentlemen, you must give me leave to speak to you the thoughts of my heart in a homely manner. You have been encouraging a set of these loose fellows, whose lives you know, are generally wicked, and

who are so profane in their conversation, that you would be ashamed to make them your companions, or take them into your houses ; and these are the men you hire to play the fool, to please you, and spread corruption wherever they go. Would either of you gentlemen, have thought it proper, to have gone upon the stage and acted for them, had any of them been sick ; and there feigned the character of a filthy whoremonger, or a swearing sailor ? Or pray Mr. Smirking, would you have liked to have seen your sister Miss Dolly, acting the part of a common strumpet, and your mother shewing forth the tricks of a wicked old bawd ; and from what I myself have seen in my *wickeder* days ; this sort of talk is quite their *standing dish*. Or would it have become you Mr. Brisk, (for you have a good voice,) to have sung one of their *nasty* foolish songs, with all their foolish antic airs ?

*Brisk.* I confess Sir, I should not have thought all that proper, any more than yourself.

*Far.* But I think it would have been quite as proper for you to have done it yourselves, as to hire these strolling buffoons to do it for you. Whether would have been the greater sin in me, to have hired Thomas Newman, to go and steal a sheep for me on Mapleton common, or to have stolen it myself ?

*Smir.* Sir I should have been glad, if we had not gone to the play to-night, because you are so offended.

*Far.* Your having offended, such a poor ordinary creature as I am, is of very little consequence indeed ; but should you not both be much more concerned, that you have offended God ? Could you Ministers but know ! (whether you call yourselves Churchmen or Dissenters, is of no consequence,) how people are hardened in sin by your lives ; how many laugh at all religion, because they see so little in those who profess to be its teachers ; while they make the duties of religion their burden, and seem never happy but when they are acting like others who “*know not God.*”

And what must many of your hearers think and feel; when they see the same man in the pulpit, and perhaps with them at the Sacrament on the Sunday; who was their companion at the play-house, or any other foolish amusement, on the week day? If he attempt to hold forth the truths of the Bible, he holds them forth against himself; he is therefore under the necessity of covering all these awful declarations, which are so plainly revealed against these ways; and preaching up in its stead a *bit* of a sermon, made up of half way heathenish morality. In short, as their lives do not come up to the Bible, they are determined to bring down the Bible to their lives. *That*, this night gentlemen, you have been attempting to do; And if by our conversation, you are not convinced that you are wrong; I am through the grace of God, more than ever convinced that I am right. God has lately wrought a wonderful change on my vile heart: And I am sure the Bible does not give us unmeaning metaphors, but tells us of divine realities. Through infinite mercy, poor wicked sinner as I have been till very lately, yet I know what it is to be "a new creature in Christ Jesus now." This has made the Bible to me a delightful book; and I trust I can now say, "Lord, how I love thy law, all the day long is my study therein." Nancy since then, I trust, is *born of God*. I pray for my wife, and children daily; I think they must see I am an altered man; though I seem to be called at the eleventh hour; for time with me must soon be at an end. I confess, I have been kept back much from these things, by the careless and neglectful lives of gentlemen of your profession. O! that you were but better men, for the sake of those precious souls who depend upon the instruction they receive from you. But I speak it plainly; neither of you can be fit to be the instructors of others, till better instructed yourselves. I never could keep my son Harry in any order, after he had been led to those places where you have been taking my daughters this



night.---Though he was wild enough before ; yet it was there that he met with his complete *ruination*. I now begin to fear, I never shall see him any more in this world. And how shall I meet him in the world to come ! I am grieved at the very heart, the bad example I have set before him.. [The Farmer weeps, and adds.] But blessed be God, that I ever met with that dear man of God, Mr. Lovegood ; by him I have been directed to see the evil of sin, and to seek for salvation in Jesus Christ ; and that salvation, I bless his name, I now find and feel, I trust, in a renewed heart, that was once such a sink of sin.

Supper being ended, the Farmer asks one of the Ministers to return thanks : they are confused and silent. The Farmer stands up and prays thus :

#### FARMER'S PRAYER.

“ Holy and merciful Savior ; we bless thee for feeding our vile bodies ; but what are our bodies to our souls ? O feed and save them for thy mercy’s sake ! My dear wife and children are here before thee ; I lift up my eyes and heart to thee for their salvation : “ turn them, O Lord ! and so shall they be turned.” Surely thou hast already saved the vilest sinner in the family, in all the world, in saving me. Is there not love in thy bleeding heart for them also, O my God and Savior ! And if my poor son, that prodigal son as he has been, is still alive, save him. O save him for thy mercy’s sake ! Hear the prayers of a broken-hearted Parent for his ruined child. Thou blessed Shepherd of souls, seek after that poor wandering sheep, who is gone so far from thee ; so far from thy fold, and from his Father’s house, and bring him near thyself. Have mercy on these young men, who call themselves thy Ministers : make them what they should be ; by saving them from the love of the world, and all their vain ways ; that they may be thy Ministers in deed and in truth. Pardon them dear Lord, in that my children have been led into

such paths of vanity by them ; and lead them by thy Holy Spirit ; that for the time to come, they may be the faithful leaders of ruined souls to the knowledge of thy great salvation. Grant this O Lord, for the sake of Christ, our most compassionate Savior and only Redeemer. Amen and Amen.

The Ministers, surprised with such an unexpected treat from the Bible, and such a prayer, looked at each other, under considerable agitation ; and after the usual salutations, retired.

## DIALOGUE VIII.

### THE PRODIGAL'S CONVERSION.

MR. LOVEGOOD, FARMER LITTLEWORTH, MR. WORTHY,  
AND OTHERS.

*Mr. Littleworth comes from his farm near Mapleton, and sits down in the kitchen deeply affected. Mr. Lovegood returns from visiting his parishioners.*

*Mr. Loveg.* **W**HY Mr. Littleworth, I am sorry to see you so much affected---is all well at home?

*Far.* Oh Sir! I cannot stand it; it quite overcomes me.

*Loveg.* What overcomes you Sir? We should not be "cast down with over-much sorrow;" upon every event we should learn to say, "Thy will be done."

*Far.* Oh Sir! My son! my son!

*Loveg.* What then, is poor Henry dead?

*Far.* Dead Sir! No; blessed be God; "this my son was dead, and is alive again;" he that was lost, and, as I thought, for ever lost, is found again; and I trust, found in Christ. Oh Sir! it so overcomes me, that I think I never shall be able to outlive it! But, blessed be God, come what will on it, I can now say, "Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!" The Lord has not only saved me, a vile old sinner,

and my daughter Nancy ; but now I trust, my dear Harry is a saved soul. Sec Sir, what a sweet letter he has sent to me. [The Farmer gives the letter to Mr. Lovegood.] Here Sir, take and read it, if you please, for I cannot read it again, it so affects me. I was above an hour before I could read it through : I cannot stand it again ; besides you can read better than I. [Mr. Lovegood takes the letter and reads it.]

*“ Island of Antigua.*

“ Dear and honored Father,

“ IT is now full four years, since in a most wicked, disobedient, and rebellious state of mind, I left your house, and entered as a captain’s clerk on board the Rambler. I confess you might have heard from me before, but I was ashamed to write. Whenever I thought of it, guilt flew in my face, while I considered how kindly you treated me as your only son : how you gave me the best education in your power : and which I am sure you did out of pure love, and to the best of your judgment ; though I confess it laid the foundation of that conduct before you and my God, which must have been my eternal ruin, had not such undeserved mercies prevented, as must for ever fill my heart with praise and glory to my most merciful God and Savior Jesus Christ. In that school my dearest Father, I met with those who first secretly led me into sin. Even when a school-boy, none but God knows the wicked devices of my heart. And as “ evil men and seducers are sure to wax worse and worse,” so it was with me. I look upon my abominable and cruel conduct to you and my dear Mother, with perpetual abhorrence and grief. I pray you both a thousand and a thousand times to forgive me, as I now trust, that vile as I have been, I myself am forgiven of God. I shall for ever bless the most merciful name of God my Savior and Redeemer, if I find you both alive, should I return to my native shore ; for again, and again have I done

enough, to bring your grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

“ I have oftentimes thought, that from my ungrateful silence you must, at least in your imagination, have numbered me with the dead ; for indeed I have been “ in deaths often.” But a most gracious God would not suffer me to die yet ; because it was his merciful design to change my heart, and constrain me to live the rest of my life, I trust, to the glory of his name. Yes my most kind Father, it was all designed by a gracious providence, that your poor prodigal son, should be for a while given over to the devices of his wicked heart, so as that he should be sent far from home to be brought near to God. I fear the word of life, which has since then been made known to me, is but little known in the town in which I received my birth and education. O my dear parents ! I want now only to live, that I may impart unto you, how I have been converted from my vile ways, and have been constrained to live to God ; and you may rely upon it, while I am enabled to depend on him, that I shall never grieve your dear hearts any more. Christ’s love to me has made me love him ; and now I love you most dearly for his name’s sake.

“ Your once rebellious, but now affectionate son most humbly requests, that neither you nor my dear mother, would blame yourselves that I had not from you a better example, before I went to sea. Few in parts knew or did better, nor yet so well ; for I fear the knowledge and love of God was sadly wanting among us all. Though about three or four years before I went to sea, there was much talk about a Mr. Lovegood, who was presented to the living of Lower Brookfield, and was much ridiculed for his religious zeal ; and I remember we all, especially my sisters, used to join in the general laugh against him. Now as this is the common lot of all good men ; I hope you will find him a faithful and upright Minister of the gospel. My dear Father, do for your own



soul's sake, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, go and hear him. [Here Mr. Lovegood was so much affected that he joined with the Farmer, and wept abundantly. After several attempts he continued the letter.] Perhaps he may administer to your soul those precious words of the gospel of Christ, which have proved the power of God to my salvation ; though once, as you well know to the grief of your heart, the vilest, the most abandoned wretch that ever lived on the earth. I should be glad, if I had time to write half a volume, to tell you all the most merciful steps in judgment, providence and grace, that have brought my vile heart to repent and return to God ; but the packet is likely to sail every hour which will take this to England, and it is supposed in about a fortnight afterwards our little fleet will sail for Portsmouth : so that within a month or five weeks after you receive this, you may expect to see your most undutiful and ungrateful child upon his knees before you, begging pardon for all his base behaviour to you and my dear mother. And though I shall bring home but a very scanty share of prize money ; yet if I can but bring to my dear parents the inestimable prize of the knowledge of Christ, that pearl of great price ; how joyful shall I be !

As to the small sum that may fall to my lot, the moment I see you I shall tell you it must be yours : for as I have confessed the sin with much grief before the Lord, I now confess it before you ; that when I used to go to markets and fairs, unknown to you, I too often kept back a part of the price of the things I sold ; and in a few other instances the money for which I sold your goods, I entirely kept to myself, and mostly for purposes extremely wicked and vile.

Though I blush for shame while I give you this information, that your son has been such a cruel thief ; yet I am very happy that it is now a little in my power to make restitution ; while I hope I shall in a measure earn my daily bread by applying myself diligently to the business of your farm as soon as I shall have my

discharge, which is promised me on account of the wound I received in my hip, by a splinter from the ship, in an engagement with the enemy; whereby I had nearly been sent to stand before the tribunal of my God, in a state most deplorably wicked: and though I may thereby go halting to the grave, yet I bless God for his most merciful correction; for if I had not been most severely wounded, and afterwards brought to the very gates of death by a fever which attended it, I might have continued the same thoughtless and wicked wretch. O blessed, for ever blessed be God for that judgment, sent in so much mercy! whereby I was made willing to attend to the very affectionate advice and prayers of some few who are Christians indeed in this floating hell. Though before, I could with others, ridicule them, yet in the time of my danger, when I felt the terrors of the Lord upon my soul, I was made willing to attend to that voice of tender mercy they administered to my desponding heart.

“Since I have been on this island, God has wonderfully preserved my health amidst an abundance of sickness. As soon as I landed, I sought after those who knew the converting grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and found it among the people called Moravians, who came over to this Island to instruct the poor Negroes in Christianity. I cannot express with what tenderness and love they carried it towards me; and it is wonderful, whenever they saw me downcast, under the sense of the evils of my past life, how they recommended me to the dying love of the Lord Jesus Christ, that my poor sinful soul might be comforted in him. I love those good people to the bottom of my heart; and shall love them to the day of my death.

“Present my affectionate love to my sisters; and as we have often joined together in sin, so may we live to pray together! I grieve my dear father, to think how ignorant and vain we all were before I went to sea; and I write with many tears, while with much shame and grief, I acknowledge what a

vile sinner I once was ; but now I can bless his dear name, who has so mercifully melted down my hardened heart, and changed my polluted nature, as that I can from the bottom of my soul, subscribe myself,

Your most dutiful,  
and affectionate son,  
HENRY LITTLEWORTH."

[Mr. Lovegood having read the letter, returns it to the Farmer.]

*Loveg.* My dear friend, I enter into all the joys you feel, and can sympathize with you, knowing how much you need divine support, though the event be so blessed and glorious.

*Far.* Oh Sir! how that dear child's letter has affected me, how can I stand it. And my poor wife was almost as much overcome as myself. She says she will never speak against religion any more, since it has done our dear Harry so much good ; and if the conversion of my dear child, from such dreadful ways of *ruination* and sin, does but bring about the salvation of my dear wife and daughters, we shall have quite a heaven upon earth. O Sir! the hundreds of prayers I have put up for my son since I have been taught to pray for myself, and now I trust they are all answered.

*Loveg.* Well Sir, hope and trust ; for nothing is too hard for the Lord. But do you not admire what the grace of God truly is, in that broken and humble spirit the Lord has given to your Son? and how true it is, that "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are passed away, and all things are become new?"

*Far.* Ah dear Sir! and don't you think that my dear Harry is a partaker of that Grace ; and that I also have felt something of the same change upon my poor old sinful heart? And for sure it is a most glorious change!

*Loveg.* Yes Mr. Littleworth, it is truly glorious : As in your son, so on the hearts of all wherein the converting grace of God is felt. Sin, however strongly rooted in our corrupted natures, must give way to the omnipotent agency of God's Holy Spirit ; and how wonderfully does this appear to be exemplified in the heart and conduct of this returning prodigal ! He has not language to describe his self-aborrence under the humiliating feelings, of how vile his former life has been ; and you perceive also, what tenderness and love he now feels to all, and what affectionate obedience he is willing to shew. How does this prove the truth of that blessed word, " that love is the fulfilling of the law ;"

*Far.* And oh ! what a wicked *blade* he was before he went to sea. After he got *linked in* with Tom Wild, Will Frolic, Sam Blood, and that set, there was no keeping him at home ; and when he found I did not chuse that they should keep up their *rackets* at my house, though I was such a careless neglectful sinner myself, yet he would watch every opportunity to be away ; and then I should hear of him driving about to every horse-race and fair, within twenty miles round. One time I would hear that he had been fighting ; then that he had been gambling ; twice was he before the justice for his drunken frolics, and night after night my dame and I have sat up for him, while sometimes he would be out all the night, and at other times he would come home at twelve or one o'clock, sulky, ill-natured, and half drunk ; and all this was my own doings ; for I was wicked and foolish enough to send him to that school where there was nothing of the fear of God ; and afterwards I took him to all sorts of *romancing nonsenses*, such as plays and puppet-shews, by way of diverting him, and that led him into company which brought on his ruin.

*Loveg.* Yes Sir, but now a very different scene is before you ; your son I humbly trust, is " horn from ooze ;" and such are made " blameless and harmless

the sons of God." "As an obedient child he will not fashion himself according to the former lusts in his ignorance;" but "as he who hath called him is holy, so will he be holy in all manner of conversation." His hands will no longer be lifted up to strike the mad and angry blow of inward murder and revenge; but with diligence and industry, will he learn to labor as providence shall direct him.---His tongue will be no more employed in the service of folly, blasphemy, and filthy conversation; but now, his heart being blessed with the grace of God, "his conversation will be as becometh the Gospel of Christ," and such as will be "to the use of edifying, that it may administer grace to the hearers:" and instead of finding him a sulky, ill-natured sot; you will find him "sober, temperate in all things," "loving, gentle, easy to be intreated."---The lion is already turned into the lamb, and the disposition of the tiger and the bear shall prevail no more: and as to his feet they will need no fetters to keep them out of those vile paths, in which he once ran with such eager haste. No dear Sir, they will rejoice to walk with you to the house of God, to hear the glad tidings of salvation; no other house like that will his feet now so delight to tread.

*Far.* Dear Sir, it quite melts me down: Oh! what joy of heart shall I feel the first time he and I shall walk together to your Church, to hear the man we once so wickedly ridiculed in the days of our ignorance, preaching unto us the love of that Savior, who has "called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." And poor Nancy, oh! what a blessing to her, in having such a brother brought home to the family. And oh! how delighted will he be, to find that he has such a sister; for it is wonderful how good, and gentle, and humble, that dear girl is become, since she has received the gospel of Christ. And when I consider the grace I have lately felt in my own heart, and how sweetly you deliver these things to us from the pulpit, I wonder any one can



withstand it. The first stroke from your dear lips, brought me, a poor hardened sinner down to the ground.

*Loveg.* So it appears to all who have been newly converted by "the word of life" themselves; but when we consider the hardness and the deceitfulness of the human heart, we shall rather wonder that any of us are renewed.

*Far.* Don't you think Sir, by my son Harry's letter, that he is really renewed?

*Loveg.* Indeed Sir, it breathes a most excellent spirit, and I trust he will give you abundantly more joy than ever he has caused you grief; but still we must tell him, if we live to see him, "that he has but just put on the armour for the battle," and "that he must watch unto prayer."

*Far.* The Lord keep both him and me watching and praying;---But oh! how it affects me to think what we all must feel when he first comes home, and finds that his poor old wicked Father has been blessed with a new heart. Oh! what a meeting it will be. But how ashamed shall I be of myself on account of the bad example I have set before him: how at times, he and I have neglected our church and sabbath, that we might go on some idle visit, or after some foolish pastime; while at other times I attended only out of form. I can't think that he would ever have been so bad in his wicked ways, if I had not first led him into them. Dear child! how grieved I am for the harm I have done to his precious soul. Well I'll confess it to him with shame, and tell him the fault was mostly mine.

*Loveg.* It may be better if neither of you dwell too much on these things; they were done in the "times of ignorance that God winked at." You are both I trust, now arrived in the new world of grace, and your business will be, with him to press forward to the eternal world of glory.

*Far.* But O Sir! when my dear child offers me his prize money, because in the days of his wicked

ness he robbed me.---How can he think I can ever take it from him ?

*Loveg.* He does not know the blessed change that has taken place upon your mind, and he probably strongly hopes by his honesty and integrity, to win your soul to Christ ; and doubtless as he now attends to his Bible, he may also think on what Paul promised Philemon on behalf of Onesimus the servant who robbed his master ; and his conscience will surely tell him, that it was worse to rob a father than a master.

*Far.* But he says he trusts God has forgiven him, and shall not I forgive him ? Dear child ! I would not grieve him for a thousand worlds. No, no ; I shall want none of his prize-money, while I have such a prize in him as my unbelieving heart never expected. It will cut me to the heart when he makes the offer.

*Loveg.* Well Sir, we must contrive to soften the matter before you and your son have the first interview.

*Far.* I wish you would Sir. For the thoughts of it are quite too much for me. He talks of begging pardon on his knees, when I should rather go on my knees to him, for leading my own son astray by sending him to such a school, and by the bad example I set before him. If he acts as he says he will, I am sure I never shall be able to bear it. [The Farmer weeps again ; after he is in a measure recovered, Mr. Lovegood thus addresses him.]

*Loveg.* My friend, though I feel for you very tenderly, yet your very tears put me in mind of the joys of "the angels in heaven over one sinner that repenteth ;" and what monuments of mercy shall we all be, when we stand before him "who hath loved us and given himself for us." But I think we can contrive matters so as that your minds may be properly prepared for the meeting.

*Far.* Why it is most likely I can't write to him before I see him, as he will come from Portsmouth directly as he lands.

*oveg.* Yes, but he will probably travel in the stage that goes through Mapleton to the north; and then you may tell Mr. Vintner of the George, to direct your son to Mr. Traffick's of the shop, who is a very sedate worthy man; and you may put a letter into his hands that he may give it to your son, and you may tell him what you think proper; and afterwards Mr. Traffick may bring him to his house and give him further particulars; and Billy Traffick, who is a very serious young man, will walk with him to your house.

*Far.* No dear child! he is lame; I must send Thomas Newman to bring him, with a horse for him to ride on, and another horse that he may bring his things with him. But for all that, Billy Traffick may come with him, for he is a choice lad. And I must do all I can to put my son into good company: for oh! what mischief was done to my precious boy by the bad company he kept before he went to sea. But let me see, I am afraid my dear child will be so ashamed to return home, that I had better go and meet him myself, and tell him that I have forgiven him from the bottom of my heart.

*Loveg.* Sir, I think your first meeting had better be at your own house, than at a public Inn, so that your first plan will be the best; and Thomas can tell him how freely you have forgiven him, and with what joy and thankfulness he will be received again: and what a feast will this be to your poor honest servant! to bring such a treasure home to his master's house; and Thomas, though a plain man, yet he is possessed of a good natural understanding, and will know very well how to break matters to him.

*Far.* And what a feast will this be to me to receive such a treasure in such a son, returned to me again in peace and safety, and with the rich treasure of the grace of God in his heart. Nobody can tell the feelings of my heart towards that dear child; it quite

overcomes me. I think I am going to be one of the happiest men in all the world.

*Loveg.* No wonder at the yearnings of a father's bowels towards such a child; you will be under the double tie of grace and nature to love each other, and to make yourselves happy in the Lord. And in addition to this, who can calculate what may be the happy result on the minds of others? when they behold a change so glorious, accomplished on one who was so awfully vitiated, and so completely depraved. And what a blessing he may prove to many of his comrades in iniquity, who were once such a curse to each other.

[A message from Mr. Lovegood's servant.]

*Servant.* Sir, 'Squire Worthy and his lady, with two of the young Misses, are just come into the hall.

*Mr. Loveg.* [to Mrs. Lovegood. My dear, will you go with them into the parlour? [To the Farmer.] Mr. Littleworth, you must go in with me.

*Far.* I am afraid if I do it will quite overcome me as bad as ever. But if you think it best I'll try, and perhaps the 'Squire may give us some advice on this occasion. He is a very condescending Gentleman.

*Mr. Worthy.* [After the usual salutations.] Why Mr. Littleworth, I did not expect to see you here. I came to enquire of our worthy Minister if he had heard any tidings of your son; as I see by the newspapers a packet arrived at Falmouth on Wednesday last from the fleet in which he sailed.

*Loveg.* Mr. Littleworth has a letter from him, and blessed one it is! O Sir! it manifests a delightful display of the divine power of grace upon the heart. The feelings of our good old friend have been quite overpowered by it. [To Mr. Littleworth.] Will you let Mr. Worthy see it Mr. Littleworth?

[Mr. Littleworth again in tears.]

*Far.* Yes; but I cannot read it, it so affects me, [To Mr. Worthy.] If I had all your honor's estate, it would not have given me half the joy I have felt in receiving that letter.

[Mr. Littleworth lends it to Mr. Worthy.]

*Wor.* Sir, as you say it is so good a letter, if it contains no family secrets, may I read it out, that my eldest daughter, who has a serious turn of mind, may gain some instruction by it?

*Far.* O yes Sir, you may read it out, but then I cannot stop to hear it again.

*Loveg.* I think Mr. Littleworth, you had better not stop, but take a walk in the garden while Mr. Worthy and I read over your son's letter, and converse about it.

*Far.* Why yes Sir; if the 'Squire will pardon me, I would rather do so, for I cannot stand it again.

[The letter is again read over, and the Farmer is a second time introduced.]

*Wor.* Well Mr. Littleworth, I must not say too much to you in a way of congratulation, as you cannot bear it; but we have been planning, that on the evening your son comes home, Mr. Lovegood had better give you the meeting, and spend the first evening with you.

*Far.* [To Mr. Worthy.] To be sure it would be *desperate unmannerly* to ask such a gentleman as you are to come and meet us; but in our old house I have a hall that would hold twenty such guests, and I hope a heart big enough to hold a thousand more.

*Wor.* Thank you my kind friend; but as Mr. Lovegood will be of the party, you will have quite company enough on that occasion.

*Mrs. Wor.* But Mr. Littleworth, next Wednesday three weeks, Mr. Lovegood is to examine the Sunday



school children, and preach a sermon to them and their parents at the Church, and afterwards Mr. Worthy is to give them all a supper in the servants' hall. Perhaps your son may be returned by that time, and then we shall be happy to see you and all your family to tea, that you may go and hear the sermon.

*Wor.* And at the same time we will send to Mr. Merryman to meet you, who was once as dissipated and wild as ever your son Henry could be, if not so outwardly wicked, though he is now so truly serious and good.

*Far.* Ah Sir! if you and Madam will but put up with our *countrysified* fashions, to be sure we should be mighty proud to make such a visit; and perhaps my daughter Polly and Patty may hear a sermon that the Lord may bless to their hearts.

*Wor.* You have quite good manners enough for any of our family. The fulsome compliments of the world are not worth minding among those who have been taught better manners by the grace of God upon the heart; and if the same blessing was to be brought home to the rest of your family, you would have a heaven upon earth.

[Mr. Worthy's servant enters the parlour.]

*Servant.* Sir, Thomas Newman has brought Mr. Littleworth's horse.

*Far.* Tell him I shall be with him presently. I thought as I walked here, it would be too much to walk home against the hill; so I thought as soon as the horses had done plough, Thomas should bring one of them. My knees and ancles are *deadly* weak. What have I suffered by the gout. But there, the Lord forgive me! it is in a measure through my own wickedness, for I have made a God of my belly.

*Loveg.* Tell Thomas to put the horse in my stable, and come in and refresh himself.

*Far.* O no Sir! I thank you, I'll be getting home. I left my wife all in tears, but then they were tears of joy. She is mighty fond of Thomas, though she does not like his religion; and he has always victuals enough when he comes to our house; and it was Thomas's good life that made me think so well of your good sermons.

*Far.* [To Mr. and Mrs. Worthy.] I wish your honor a good day; the same to you, Madam.

*Wor.* Farewell Mr. Littleworth.

[Mr. Lovegood goes with the Farmer to see him mounted.]

*Loveg.* Well Thomas, how do you do? how is Betty and all the children?

*Tho.* They are all very well Sir, thank the Lord, except little Joseph, and he has been *sore* bad with the hooping cough; but Madam Worthy sent him some *doctor's stuff* that has done him an abundance of good.

*Loveg.* Let me see Thomas, Joseph is one of the twins.

*Tho.* Ah sweet child! and I felt him as dear to me as an Isaac; and I should have needed an Abraham's faith to have parted with him. Dear babes! if I have but strength to work for them, and grace to pray for them, that is all I want.

*Loveg.* But have you heard that Master Harry is coming back from sea.

*Tho.* Why Sir, I heard that, just before I came down, and that my Master had been *most desperately* affected at the news. Lord grant that he may be brought home, so as that he may be brought to God! [To his Master.] Who can tell Master?

*Far.* Oh Thomas! that is done already. Praise the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me bless his holy name!

*Tho.* What, has Master Harry felt the converting grace of God?

*Far.* Oh Thomas! [Farmer weeps and wipes his eyes.] but I'll tell you as I ride along, and you shall walk by me.

*Loveg.* Well Mr. Littleworth, the Lord bless and support you.

*Far.* And you too Sir, a thousand times, for the good you have done to my immortal soul. [They go home. The Farmer continues speaking to Thomas.]

Oh Thomas! you will be all *amazement* to hear how broken, and humble, and contrite, my dear child writes about his wicked courses.

*Tho.* Master, that is a blessed sign; for when once we are made to hate sin, we may be sure there is a divine change. The Lord be praised if Master Harry has been saved from his wicked state; for how wild and wicked for sure he was. But Master, if you and I do but think what we once were, and what through the grace of God we now are, we need not despair of any. Can't you remember what Mr. Lovegood said about three Sundays ago, when he was preaching about "Christ being able to save to the uttermost?" Who but a God can tell how far God's uttermost can go?

*Far.* I trust I know that to be true, for the Lord has made me to be a wonder to myself. But Harry has no notion how the Lord has converted the heart of such a poor old sinner as I have been. How he will be surprized when he comes home. It quite overcomes me to think of it.

*Tho.* Had we not better contrive to tell him that before-hand?

*Far.* That we have contrived already, and you are to go and meet him at Mapleton, and Mr. Lovegood is to come and sup with us. O what a blessed meeting it will be?

*Tho.* And how much more blessed still will be the meeting in heaven. But Master, if I may be so bold, how came it all about?

*Far.* Here Thomas, [lending him the letter,] you shall take this letter home with you, and you and Betty may read it together; but be sure and take care of it, for I value it more than *untold gold*. O! how I shall count the days till my dear son comes home. And after supper Mr. Lovegood will give us family prayer: and after that I am determined in my poor fashion to keep it up; for then we shall be quite strong when dear Harry comes home; and who knows but it may be a blessing to my wife and two daughters.

*Tho.* Why every body knows what a Christian-like family our 'Squire's is: and I do think it is all on account of the wonderful good order that is kept up in family prayer.

*Far.* Aye aye Thomas; and by the blessing of God we'll have family prayer too; and Mr. Lovegood says he will make a hymn on purpose upon the prodigal's return; and a *brave* hymn I'll warrant it will be. Thomas, you must be there to pitch the tune; and Mr. Lovegood says you shall be clerk at Church next, if any thing happens to old Andrew Snuffle.

*Tho.* Ah dear! how shall I feel if ever our Minister should make such a poor simple creature clerk of our Parish. To be sure it would be a wonderful help to me and my poor dear Betty, to bring up our children. But I am sadly afraid Mr. Lovegood will not be long Minister of our Parish.

*Far.* The Lord forbid! but why should you think so Thomas?

*Tho.* Why I am told our 'Squire is to go next winter to London, to put one of his sons to some place of *larning*. I hope he won't stop long, for all the poor people in our village are in a *sad taking* when he is away; but I am afraid if he were to tell Lord *Cancellor* what a wonderful man our Minister is; the king (God bless

him,) will soon make him Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

[Thus the Farmer and Thomas went on chatting till his arrival at home. The sequel of some further events will soon be presented to the reader.]



## DIALOGUE IX.

### THE UTILITY OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS EX- EMPLIFIED.

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MR. WORTHY, MR. LOVEGOOD, FARMER LITTLEWORTH,  
AND OTHERS.

**S**AMUEL WORTHY Esq. possesses an ample fortune in the north. His father who was knighted when he took up the county address, on the birth of his present Majesty, he being then the Sheriff, was one of those good old-fashioned gentlemen, who used to live at home among their tenants and neighbours; giving a true sample of the simplicity and generosity known in this kingdom about seventy years ago, when no country gentlemen went to London, but once in four or five years. His mode of travelling was in a coach and four, the butler and groom riding upon two other coach horses, commonly called helpers. Turnpike roads being then not in existence, they travelled not more than five miles an hour, and about twenty-five miles a day; and in general were obliged to pass a Sunday upon the road. From the Inn, he and his family always went twice to church. He had no more thought of breaking in on the solemnities of the Sabbath, by travelling on that day, than he had of robbing on the high-way. You had always the idea of a funeral procession passing through the village on the commencement of his journey; but on his return, every bell in the steeple echoed, and re-echoed the joy of the inhabitants; when every grown person stood at the door with a bow or a curtesy, and ever

child ran out into the street, with a bow down to the ground, close by the coach door, to testify their general joy on his happy return.

While in London, the family used to take lodgings at about three pounds per week, in some convenient large house in or near Bond Street, for the sake of country air: even Brook Street, connected with it, was not then in existence; and assumed its name from an aunt of the writer of these dialogues, who was also herself no distant relation to the family of the Worthies. This family, though once very numerous, being found almost in every county, and some of them even of noble blood, yet from a very fatal disease, which has of late years prevailed among them, the family has been considerably lessened, while some had their fears lest ere long they should be entirely extinct. This unhappy mortality has taken place since their descendants have been accustomed to attend so many bathing and water-drinking places in the summer, and especially since they have taken up their winter's residence in our great metropolis; and may be imputed, partly to the poisonous vapors of the former, and the noxious stagnated air of the latter. The venerable Knight (a title in those days honorable,) kept a very regular house. Though he was rather *formal* than *spiritual* in his religion, yet family prayer was punctually attended to; nor could any thing but sickness detain the family from Church and sacrament on all occasions; but unfortunately for that gentleman, Mr. Deadman was then Vicar of the Parish.

His son, Mr. S. Worthy, not less respectable than his father, succeeded to the estate some years ago. After which Mr. Deadman died of a lethargy, and Mr. Lovegood was providentially presented to the Living. Mr. and Mrs. Worthy were at first considerably astonished at what was called *his new doctrine*, and felt some degree of irritation, though intermixed with candor. When they first heard, they considered that as all the formality and decency

belonging to the character of their respectable predecessor was adopted by them, they were righteous enough already ; but by the wise and good conduct of Mr. Lovegood, their prejudices were soon abated ; and after he had delivered a most striking sermon from that text, " Thou hast a name to live and art dead," they were determined to examine the Bible for themselves : and happily for them, (they being bred very strict church people,) they found the Bible so well comported with the doctrines of the Common Prayer Book, that they soon discovered old Mr. Deadman, and his cousin-german Mr. Blindman, had preached no more the true Doctrine of the Bible, or of the Church of England, as it relates to salvation by Jesus Christ, than if they had been two of the priests of Jupiter.

This truly valuable gentleman, as soon as he received good, promoted it to the utmost of his power, and became a very warm advocate for Sunday Schools. The reader therefore shall know what passed while he made a feast for a large assembly of poor children and their parents, belonging to the Sunday School of the Parish in which he presided.

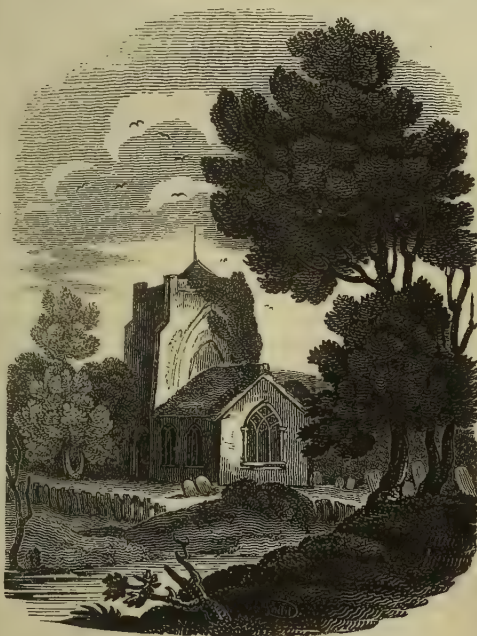
The reader must recollect, that in a former dialogue Mr. and Mrs. Worthy had invited Farmer Littleworth to attend the meeting, as hopes were then entertained, that by the time intended for the celebration of this kind festival, Henry might arrive from sea : the Farmer, however, having heard of many storms and tempests, was strongly agitated with a variety of doubts and fears, whether he should ever be blessed with the sight of his son, now rendered so dear to him by such circumstances as have already been related. Notwithstanding the invitation was accepted. The Farmer rode down to Mr. Worthy's, though with a heavy heart, (to see his son was now all in all to him,) and Miss Nancy rode behind her Father. Miss Polly and Miss Patty chose to walk, while Sam carried some new purchased trappings, of the tawdry kind, from Mrs. Flirt's, which were to

be put on in Mrs. Trusty's room, (the housekeeper,) before they made their appearance in the parlour. Thus, while the affectation of two of the Misses was noticed with secret ridicule and contempt, the unaffected simplicity of Nancy and her Father, was observed with reverence and respect.

After a few compliments and congratulations had passed between the families, in which Miss Polly and Miss Patty brought forward many specimens of their vanity and self-conceit; whilst the Farmer attempted to give a more profitable turn to the conversation, by observing what a deal of wickedness he and his dear Harry might have avoided, had they been blessed with the same religious instruction when they were young. But Mr. Lovegood reminding them that the bell tolled for church, interrupted the conversation, that he, with his excellent patron, might lead his family of little ones to the church, where they were seated together, and surrounded by their Parents and friends; he then chose some very appropriate lessons, and made some affectionate and striking observations as he read them.---His sermon, as designed for children, was concise, but impressive: and knowing that little minds must have short lessons, he varied the subject by the following histories.

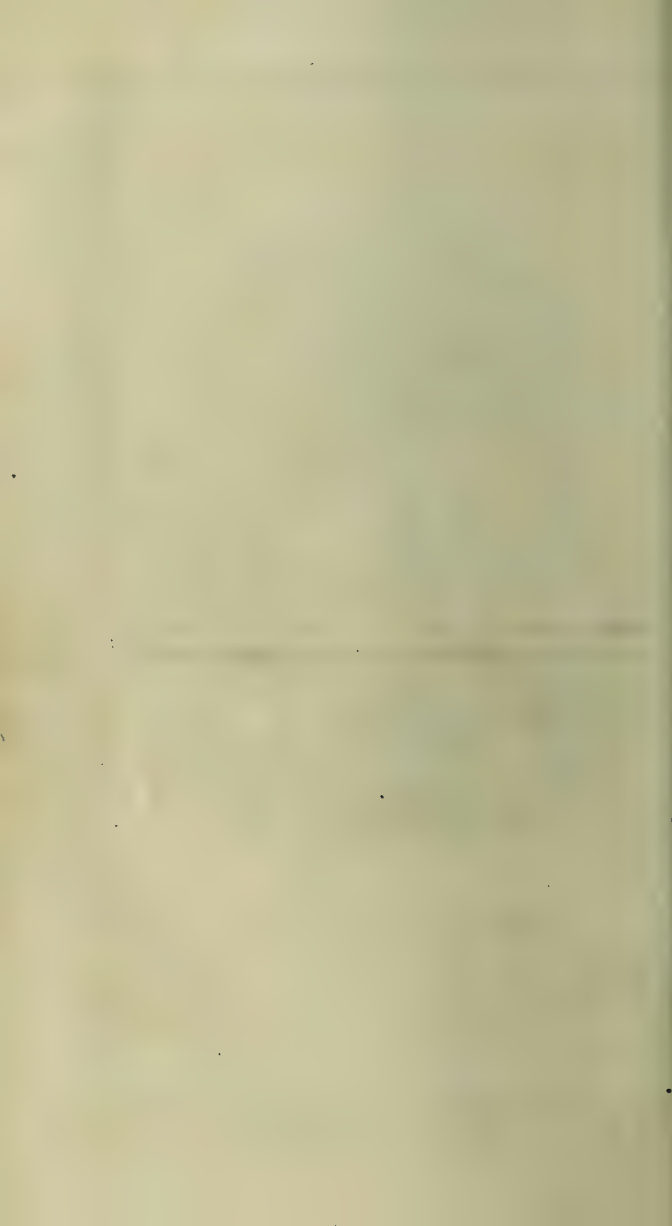
First, he told them of a child of a perverse and obstinate turn of mind, who neither with nor without correction would obey her poor Mother, whose husband had cruelly gone away and left her. This child, after a mild and moderate correction, went out of the house resentful and sulky, and drowned herself in the brook, which entirely broke the Mother's heart: from whence he took an opportunity of warning children against the evil consequences of bad tempers, and of enforcing the "meekness and gentleness which was in Christ Jesus," which is the highest ornament among all those who are Christians indeed.

His next story was about a most lovely boy, who though once inclined to be very wicked, yet his heart afterwards became so tenderly impressed with



BROOKFIELD CHURCH.





the Savior's love to fallen sinners, that he would be frequently quite overpowered by the tender feelings of his own mind. He would even ask his parent's leave to part with the shoes from off his feet, and even his clothes from off his back, when he saw other poor children, as he supposed, in greater want than himself; and when he had no money of his own to give, the dear child would often turn beggar to his parents and others to assist them. He never thought of telling a lie, because he dreaded the idea of doing wrong; and only wrong things need to be covered with a lie. And whenever he saw other children do wrong, he would talk to them very gravely and seriously against their evil ways; and even in his play if any children behaved cruel or unkind, he would grieve, weep, and retire. But this dear child it seems, was too full of heaven to live long on earth; knowing that some of his brothers and sisters seemed to be inclined to be bad; before he died, he called them around his bed three times over, on the three last days of his life, and told them all that he was going to his dear Savior, who had pardoned his sins, and changed his heart; and exhorted them most affectionately to turn to the Lord, and renounce their sins also. - He even cast his dying arms around their necks one by one, praying them to turn, (as he expressed himself,) to the dear Jesus, insisting, with many tears, that they should promise him they would; and then added, "I could die for you all a thousand times, if that could but save you from dying in your sins. O! think of a dying Christ; and give him your hearts, that we may meet again in glory."

After a most affectionate application to the children, Mr. Lovegood addressed their Parents; observing, that as a Parent, he knew the powers of natural affection; but urged upon them an affection of a far more refined and spiritual nature---an affection for their souls. He observed, that correction should never be administered, but in much tenderness and love; that every stripe given by an an ry

hand, from a revengeful heart, increased the evil for which the child was so unwisely and unmercifully corrected. That we should chastise our children as the Lord corrects his ; never in wrath, but ever in love. In short, his address to the Parents was not less wise and good, than his exhortation to the children was affectionate and kind ; while every heart seemed to be melted down under the sweet influence which attended his discourse. Nor was it a less affecting scene to observe with what difficulty Mr. Lovegood, who possessed very tender feelings, got through these stories, and this address. How Thomas Newman nodded at his lovely group of little ones, to excite their more serious attention. How Betty sat with her babe at the breast, praying for a blessing on every word. How Farmer Littleworth wept like the rain, while he heard of the conversion of the child, thinking all the time on the conversion of his own son. How Mr. Merryman, lately recovered from a dissolute life, through Mr. Lovegood, looked up to him as to a Father, with fixed attention and watery eyes ; beholding the lovely instrument in the hand of God, by whom he was reclaimed from a life, miserable and dishonourable to himself, and destructive to the souls of his parishioners : and how Mr. Worthy, with an elevated smile of approbation and delight, rejoiced in the happiness and blessedness of the people in the neighbourhood, among whom he lived with affectionate patriarchal simplicity of conduct ; praising and blessing God for influencing the mind of *Lord Cancellor*, (as Thomas calls him,) to send such a man into that Parish---so wise, zealous, and kind as dear Mr. Lovegood. O ! what a blessing would England enjoy, if every Parish pulpit was adorned with such a Minister sanctioned by men of such affluence and character as good Esquire Worthy of Brookfield Hall. Long live the family ; may they be as numerous as they are good ; and may they never want such a chaplain as Mr. Lovegood, to administer among them the blessed word of everlasting life !

After the sermon, Mr. Lovegood gave out the following hymn, which was sung by the children, and Thomas Newman pitched the tune.

WHAT children like us have such cause to be glad ?  
What children such means of instruction have had ?  
Such seasons to hear, and to sing of the Lord ?  
While many know nothing of him or his word.

We hear how our Maker from heaven came down,  
And willingly left for lost sinners his throne ;  
Then taking our nature, became a poor child,  
And us by his suff'rings to God reconcil'd.

O myst'ry of godliness, wonder of grace !  
May we without ceasing adore him and praise :  
O ! teach us to know what a Savior we have,  
To trust him, and love him, and on him believe.

Next commenced the examination. Mr. Attentive, a barber from Mapleton, was the school-master, who was appointed to this office, because he had made a sacrifice of his daily bread, by not following his occupation on the Lord's day.

Mr. Lovegood was the examiner. Mrs. Fairspeech, who was a *professor* of that religion which she never *possessed*, sent her son with others, to the Sunday-school, and he was the first who was examined.

*Mr. Loveg.* Well Bobby Fairspeech, what do you remember of the sermon I have just now been preaching ?

*Bob.* I remember the text Sir.

*Loveg.* Let us hear you repeat it.

*Bob.* " Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

*Loveg.* And what did I say to you upon that subject ?

*Bob.* Why that we were all miserable sinners, and should be ruined if we did not come to Christ.

*Loveg.* Then it is to be hoped that you, as a miserable sinner, have been taught to come to Christ. Do you know what it is to give him your heart ?

*Bob.* Not so much as I should.

*Loveg.* Why then, I fear you neglect to pray to him.

*Bob.* Oh no Sir ; for my mother would beat me sadly if I did not *say my prayers*.

*Loveg.* Surely child, you must be very wicked if you need to be beaten to say your prayers ; but I should hope your mother has a better way of teaching you to pray than by beating you to it. I can hardly think that your Father, who is a sensible man, though he does not come to Church so often as he should, would allow you to be beaten to make you pray.

*Bob.* Sir my Father is scarcely ever at home when it is my time to go to bed, for he always spends his evenings with Mr. Sobersides, the sadler.

[Mr. Lovegood, prudently forbore asking any more questions, lest he should dive into family secrets before the children : but the truth was, that though Mrs. Fairspeech could appear very soft and *saintish* before others, yet she was of a turbulent temper, self-willed, insulting, and irritating to her husband ; especially when alone, and after she had driven him away from the family, she would consume three times as much in applying to the gin-bottle as he and Mr. Sobersides did in a pint or two of beer over a pipe of tobacco, while they read the newspaper, and conversed on the politics of the day. As for the faithful and salutary reproofs, bestowed on Mrs. Fairspeech, they were all spent in vain ; she still continued the perpetual grief of Mr. Lovegood's mind, who hated nothing more than the *cant* and hypocrisy of such false-hearted professors.]

We now attend to the examination of *Jacky Proud*.

*Loveg.* Well what good have you got by coming to the Sunday school, and attending the Church ?

*Jacky.* A great deal Sir.



*Loveg.* What then, do you think you have a good heart?

*Jacky.* I hope so Sir.

*Loveg.* How is it then, that you can say after me, 'We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no health in us?' and how could you pray that God would "have mercy on you a miserable sinner?" I am afraid you are very inattentive to those excellent prayers I read among you Sunday after Sunday; and this is no great proof of the goodness of your heart.

*Jacky.* Why Sir, my Mother and god-mother both say I am a very good child.

*Loveg.* But should you not rather believe what God's word says? "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

*Jacky.* Sir I do my duty as well as I can.

*Loveg.* What do you mean by doing your duty my child?

*Jacky.* I always come to Church, and say my prayers night and morning.

*Loveg.* But merely saying your prayers is not doing your duty; for many people say their prayers, and never mind their meaning; and instead of doing our duty, we commit a very great sin in saying our prayers in a thoughtless and negligent manner.---But that I may shew your heart is not altogether so good as you think, I must ask you a few more questions.---Are you never angry?

*Jacky.* Not very often Sir.

*Loveg.* I did not ask you how often you were angry: the Bible says all anger is murder: for God judges the secrets of the heart, so that whenever you are angry, you commit an act of murder in your heart before him; and how is it that a child, with such wickedness in his nature, can have a good heart?

*Jacky.* I hope I shall make myself better by and by.

*Loveg.* I am sorry you should talk of making your-

self better ; for when I teach children the catechism, I tell them they can do nothing without " God's special grace ;" but if you can do it by-and-by, you can as well do it now ; and I am sure you must be a bad child, if you do not wish to be better till by-and-by. But did you never tell a lie ?

*Jacky.* Why I told one the other day, when I said I was not proud of my new clothes.

*Loveg.* Why then, it seems you can not only tell a lie, but be guilty of the sin of pride. I am afraid, my poor child, your heart is much worse than you suppose.

*Jacky.* Sir there are many children more *wickeder* than I am, for I *never* say bad words.

*Loveg.* Do you never, in a careless manner, say, O Lord ! O God ! O Christ !

*Jacky.* Yes Sir ; but they are not bad words.

*Loveg.* No ; the words are good ; but are not you a very bad-hearted child for " taking the Lord's name in vain," when you are told in the third commandment, the " Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain ? No wonder while you say your prayers, you forget what they mean ; for I fear that even *then*, you " take the Lord's name in vain." [The child is silent. Mr. Lovegood adds,] I hope you will soon know more of the wickedness of your own heart ; but I must now talk to *Timothy Simple*.

[He was the son of an industrious widow, left with four children ; who by washing, weeding in the garden, and running of errands, collected by the hand of industry, every penny in her power for her indigent children ; now and then receiving some occasional relief from the money given at the sacrament, which was very largely attended at Mr. Lovegood's Church, together with some further support, ever flowing to all known subjects of human woe, who come within the knowledge of the honorable possessors of Brookfield Hall.]

*Loveg.* Well Timothy my child, what do you

think of your heart? Is it as good as Jacky Proud's?

*Tim.* I am afraid I am not so good as I should be; but I hope God will make me better.

*Loveg.* Then you believe in what I have frequently taught you, that we can do nothing "without God's special grace?"

*Tim.* Oh yes Sir! for I am afraid my heart is very wicked.

*Loveg.* Why do you think so?

*Tim.* I am ashamed to tell Sir.

*Loveg.* Well my good child, I am very glad to hear you say you are ashamed of your sins; for when that is the case, our most merciful Savior will not only pardon your sins, but give you his grace to change your heart.

*Tim.* I hope he will Sir, for sure I am, it feels very hard; for when you told that story, though other children cried much, I could hardly cry at all; and yet I should be very glad if the Lord would make me as good a child as he was.

*Loveg.* So he will my child, if you call upon him in humble prayer.

*Tim.* Sir I always say the prayers out of the little book you gave me, but I am very forgetful while I say them. I wish I was as good as sister Sally, and as my Mother wishes me to be.

*Loveg.* Is it not a great blessing from the Lord that you have such a good Mother and sister?

*Tim.* Yes Sir, I thank the Lord for it! for you often tell us, that if it were not for the grace of God we should be all very wicked.

*Loveg.* And should you not be very grateful and obedient to your Mother, for working so hard, that you may have a little bread, and some decent clothes.

*Tim.* O yes Sir! and she thanks God Almighty every day for sending you into our Parish; for she says she was not a good woman till you came.

*Loveg.* But you know my child, there are many

bad people still living in the Parish since I have been your Minister. How came your mother to be better, while they continue in the same bad state ?

*Tim.* Why Sir, you often tell us about regeneration and a new heart ; and that makes my mother a good woman ; because she has a new heart.

*Loveg.* Then you believe that all people who have new hearts will be good people.

*Tim.* Yes Sir ; for it is the Holy Spirit of God who gives us these new hearts, that we may by his grace, love God and keep his commandments. And the reason why people are so wicked is, because they have not God's Holy Spirit in their hearts.

*Loveg.* Can you prove this by some text of scripture ?

*Tim.* My memory is very bad, but I remember one.

*Loveg.* What is that my child ?

*Tim.* Sir it is the text you preached from two Sundays ago : “ Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

*Wor.* Have you a Bible my dear child ?

*Tim.* No your honor ; but my Mother says she will try to get me one when I am a little bigger.

*Wor.* As you are big enough already to make a good use of a Bible, you shall have one directly. He is immediately presented with the invaluable present, while the poor widowed mother was ordered to call at the Hall on the morrow.

[The rest of Timothy's answers were in the same style ; he was a simple-hearted affectionate child, and his good natural disposition was well cultivated and improved by Mr. Lovegood's diligent attention to the poor children of the Parish.]

Richard Heedless's child was next examined.

*Loveg.* Well Mr. Attentive, how does this child come on ? Though he comes to the Sunday school : I never see his Father at Church.

*Attent.* I am afraid Sir, his Church is too often at the Nag's Head, in Mapleton.

*Loveg.* Well, but if the father acts improperly, that is no reason why the child may not receive good.

*Attent.* Oh Sir ! I cannot get him on at any rate : for all that he receives on the Sunday, he forgets on the week days ; and I am afraid it is only for the sake of the feast that we see him now.

*Loveg.* [To Ned Heedless.] Why my child, how is it that I hear all this of you ? but let us see if you understand any thing. Who made you ?

*Ned.* God Almighty.

*Loveg.* What did he make you for ?

*Ned.* To do my duty, and mind my religion.

*Loveg.* But do you do your duty, and mind religion as you ought ?

*Ned.* I do it as well as my father.

*Loveg.* I am afraid if you do no better, your duty is miserably done ; but tell me who redeemed you ?

*Ned.* Mr. Littleworth redeemed us last Monday.

*Loveg.* [To Mr. Littleworth.] What can this poor child mean by saying you redeemed them ?

*Far.* Truly Sir I cannot tell, unless it is that I stopped his father's wages to redeem his clothes out of pawn ; for after he had been two days drunk at Mapleton revel ; he pledged every bit of decent clothes he had to pay his alehouse debts : and when I saw him such a dirty ragged fellow ; I told him he should work for me no more till he had taken his clothes from the pawnbroker's.

*Wor.* [To Heedless.] I fear Master Heedless, your son's ignorance is to be laid to the charge of your wickedness.

*Heedl.* Your honor, it can't be expected that I should be able to teach my children ; for I was *never* bred to *no* learning.

*Loveg.* Why thousands and tens of thousands, who were never bred to learning, have yet been blessed with grace ; and you cannot suppose you need to be a bad man, because you are a poor man, nor need you be the poor man you are now, if it were not



for the wickedness of your heart. Do you ever pray?

*Heedl.* Why Sir, *more's* the pity, I cannot read.

*Loveg.* I did not ask you if you could read, but I asked you if you can pray.

*Heedl.* I can say the Lord's prayer from top to bottom.

*Loveg.* And is this all your religion? I fear you are in a dreadful state. And though you scarce ever attend Church; yet I hear of late you can take the trouble to walk five miles another way, that you may go to the Mass at Holyrood-Hill. This is making bad a thousand times worse.

*Heedl.* Why Sir, 'Squire Massman has been sending his priest, Mr. Sneaking, to call upon us, and to tell us what the true and right religion is: and you know Sir, he is very charitable; and Madam Massman always gives the poor folk a dinner when she knows they come from far; and the 'Squire says he'll give every man a new suit of clothes, when he is determined to change his religion *outright*.

*Loveg.* Fine converts truly! if these are their motives.---I always thought that the superstitions of popery were best supported by the tricks of hypocrisy; though I question if converts made by such motives in the present day, will not appear to be much of the same stamp of those made by the Pharisees of old, who "could compass sea and land to make one proselyte;" though when thus made, they became "twofold more the children of hell than themselves." Pray do you think you will be made a better man by thus *changing your religion*, as you are pleased to call it Master Heedless?

*Heedl.* Mr. Sneaking says he can prove it, that our's is quite a new religion, and that their's is the only true old religion whereby men can be saved.

*Loveg.* Yes yes, we know what sort of tricks these people can play, *sneaking* into peoples houses, and imposing upon their ignorance; but why do they not come forward and face us boldly; and we can soon

prove that theirs, instead of being the *old* religion, was utterly unknown among the primitive Christians ; and that all their idle ceremonies and trumpery inventions, were never thought of in the earlier days of Christianity ; so that a day of reformation did not come before it was wanted, to sweep away those superstitious observations, and Monkish inventions, which not till the *latter* days of ignorance were brought in upon the Christian Church. It is we therefore, who have the claim of being of the *old* religion, who make the example of the primitive Christians, the model by which we wish to be ruled ; and chuse to be guided by no other book, but that good old book the Bible.

*Heedl.* But old Father Canter, another of the Esquire's priests ; who is a very soft-spoken gentleman, and quite a favorite with the Esquire, says that none but their Clergy should read the Bible, because other people cannot properly understand it.

*Loveg.* That is, they cannot understand it according to their perverted mode of interpreting it : for I'll warrant the brains of other people are quite as good as the brains of a set of popish priests, though they may not be in the habit of using them for such crafty purposes : but while we are all commanded to " search the scriptures," as being the only book calculated to make " us wise unto salvation ;" it is easy enough to discover that they wish to prevent our approach to that book of knowledge, lest their evil deeds, and abominable doctrines should thereby be brought to light. I question if the priests of Baal did less harm among the Israelites in former times, than these popish priests of Rome do among professing Christians of the present day. I should not wonder if they had attempted to deceive you further, by telling you that they could pardon you *from sin*, while you are living *in sin*.

*Heedl.* Why Sir, both the 'Squire's priests have taken a deal of pains to explain that to me ; they say, as theirs is the only true church, our Savior has given

them the power of forgiving sins, and to nobody else; provided they go to confession and do penance. What a fine sermon for sure, old father Canter preached, when he took these words for his text, "Do *penance*,\* for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

*Loveg.* Oh! the wickedness and low cunning of these deceitful priests, in their vile attempts to delude the ignorant, by making them to understand as though nothing was meant by that holy grace of repentance unto life; but after their superstitious observances to stand before a priest, and then to do penance that they may afterwards pick their pockets by granting them absolution. But how can one man forgive the sins of another, when no man can forgive his own sins? However, God will certainly ratify what his Ministers may say, that "he will pardon and absolve all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel:" yet where these are wanting, all the priests on the earth can never forgive a single sin, while the sinner is shut up in impenitence and unbelief. And have they never told you any of their tales about purgatory?

*Heedl.* O yes Sir! I have heard a deal of that place since I have been in their way: and 'Squire Massman's uncle died the other day, and though every body in that way says, he must be gone to purgatory because he was such a wicked man while he lived; yet they have no doubt, but in a little time they shall be able to get him out again, and get him as good a place in heaven as if he had been as great a saint as St. Peter himself; for he has left a deal of money for the priests to make prayers and say

\* Other perversions of scripture might be also mentioned, in that translation of the Bible which is in use among them; but the entire omission of the second commandment, in all their printed copies of the Decalogue, because it is so pointedly against their abominable idolatries, is a full proof of the satanic wisdom of popery, in keeping back the knowledge of that sacred volume, which they so blasphemously mutilate and pervert.

masses for him. Now Sir, I had no hopes of salvation while I followed your religion ; yet their religion gives me a deal of comfort, that I shall be saved, provided I die in the right faith.

*Loveg.* Ah ! but Master Heedless, you are a poor man, and you never will be able to fee the priests : and what will become of you then ?

*Heedl.* O Sir ! theirs is a very charitable religion, they don't stand upon money, provided we all give them as much as we can ; but they say that neither confession nor absolution will do us any good, if it is done for nothing ; and that we must give a little money for the good of the Church.

*Loveg.* So then when they cannot play a great game they are contented to play a little one. But how is it after all the application of their holy water, their confessions, absolutions, and especially in their different masses in which they blasphemously pretend, even to make their own creator by their hocus pocus\* tricks over a little wafer, and then call it the real body and blood of our Lord, which they say they offer up for the living and the dead. It is a strange thing that souls should go even to purgatory after such an abundance of their spiritual quackery for the salvation of souls ; and pray what are we to think of their extreme unction ? which you know is one of their boasted sacraments ; where is the good of it ? if still the poor sinner is to be left to tumble into purgatory, as though he were still to be punished for pardoned sin.

*Heedl.* Sir, Mr. Canter told me that we must never dispute against the Church, but believe as she says.

*Loveg.* But let me ask you further ; have they made your swallow large enough to take down their preposterous doctrine of transubstantiation ? Does

the religion of the gospel demand us that we should belie our very senses ? Am I while I can see, feel, smell, and taste, to say that a wafer is turned into flesh and blood, and that a priest, if he be as wicked as Satan, has power to create another bit of the body of our once incarnate Savior ; and that this god of this wicked man's making, is to be a little bit of that God who made the world ; while this wicked priest further pretends to have a power to offer up this christ of his making, as a sacrifice both for the dead and the living ; contrary to the scripture, that he voluntarily gave himself for us all ?

[Heedless is dumb.]---Mr. Lovegood then addressed the children more at large against the errors of popery, he expatiated in an especial manner against the accursed cruelties of the Romish religion, whose very system is persecution, even to the murder of those who rather chose to be governed by the word of God, than by the horrid dogmas of their infamous, impious, and tyrannic Popes : that France, Spain, Holland, England, Germany, and again but a very few years ago, Ireland, had been made almost so many fields of blood thereby ; that the principles of popery made every man a sworn rebel against every protestant state in which he lived ; in short, that though it appeared as if Mr. Lovegood almost lost his temper in his holy zeal against the abominable tricks of the antichristian church ; yet his exhortation was admirably calculated to give a most faithful warning to young minds, against principles so dangerous and destructive to the souls of men.]\*

\* In all the above strong remarks against popery, it is not to be supposed that every papist partakes of all the evils that popery is calculated to entail ; but though it is readily allowed, that many of them are much better than their bad religion, yet could they be persuaded boldly to resort to the pure unmixed volume of Revelation, the baseless fabric erected in their superstitious imaginations would soon be brought low.

Many years ago, I persuaded an Italian, who was educated in all the superstitions of popery, to read the New Testament ; his wife, who was a protestant, urging also the same request ;



*Loveg.* Richard, here are two good books for you, "A compassionate Address;" and "The Protestants Resolutions against Popery;" and Thomas Newman, who is almost your next neighbour, can read very well, and I dare say he will be so kind as to read them to you.

*Tho.* Why Richard knows I would be glad to read to him for his good, whenever I can spare time.

*Loveg.* Well Thomas, we will next hear what improvement your boy has made.---[To young Thomas.] ---By whom were all things created, and by whom are they upheld and preserved?

*Tho.* By the Almighty God.

*Loveg.* And who is the Almighty God?

*Tho.* He is a most holy Spirit.

*Loveg.* And how should you serve him?

*Tho.* "In spirit and in truth."

*Loveg.* And do you think you do your duty as God demands; for you know at all times he sees and hears all you say and do.

*Tho.* Sir I know I often forget God, though he knows me much better than I know myself.

*Loveg.* What do you mean by saying God is Almighty?

*Tho.* I believe he is Almighty, because he can do

after some time I repeated my visit, and found we had happily succeeded. This however, procured me such a close catechizing, as from an honest inquisitive mind I might naturally have expected. "Is *dis de* real New Testament?" I replied, "Yes, indeed it is." "What *dat* real New Testament *dat* is a part of *de* Bible in which we all ought to believe?" I answered, "Yes, and I think I can say justly and honestly translated,"—"Well, well," said he, "*dat* is very strange, very strange indeed; for I have read it all over from *de* beginning to *de* end, and I cannot find one bit of *de* mass in it." Though a poor Irish woman, who could not read a letter, told me quite another story, when in converse with her: "You know, and please your reverence, that our blessed Lord and Saviour was the first that ever said mass."—How true it is that ignorance is the mother of their devotion!!

every thing, and that he sees and knows the ways and hearts of all.

*Loveg.* What do you mean by saying God is holy ?

*Tho.* Why he is holy because he loves nothing but that which is good, like himself. All holy men, and holy angels are his delight.

*Loveg.* But my good boy, what do you mean by holiness ?

*Tho.* It is loving God with all our hearts, with all our minds, and souls, and strength, and our neighbours as ourselves.

*Loveg.* What is sin then my child ?

*Tho.* Why whenever we neglect to love, and fear, and trust in God, and pray to him, and serve him ; we sin against him ; and whenever we are angry, unjust, and neglectful in our duty towards our parents, our governors, and fellow-creatures ; we sin against our neighbours.

*Loveg.* But if God be so very holy, are we not all very miserable sinners before him ?

*Tho.* Yes. The Bible says, "there is none righteous, no not one ;" but I think my Father and Mother are very good, and so are you Sir, and 'Squire Worthy.

*Loveg.* Well but you know we must all say, " By the grace of God I am what I am."

*Tho.* Yes Sir ; and my Father always says such sort of words when he prays with us.

*Loveg.* What do you mean by the grace of God ?

*Tho.* Why my Father has taught me this text, " You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ; though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich."

*Loveg.* What do you mean by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ?

*Tho.* That he died for us poor sinners on the cross, that we might be saved, because he suffered in our stead.

*Loveg.* What then are all poor sinners to be saved, because Christ died on the cross ?

*Tho.* O no Sir, for you tell us from the pulpit, that if we reject Christ, Christ will reject us ; and that all sinners who come to Christ will have their hearts changed and purified by his Spirit ; and that “ without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” You have been saying to us just now, that every child must know the way of sin to be the high road to hell : but I pray to the Lord to convert me by his grace, that I may live to his glory.

*Loveg.* The Lord bless you my good boy. I am very glad you have been able to attend so well to the instruction of your father ; and that you get so much good by coming to the Sunday school : and as our worthy 'Squire has given me some Bibles to distribute among the children who know how to make good use of them, I shall give you one of the best of them. [Mr. Lovegood gives him a Bible.]--Remember now that this is your own book, and the book of God's own writing, to make us wise unto salvation. Now turn round and thank the 'Squire for his present.

*Tho.* [With a bow down to the ground.] I thank your honor a thousand times.

The reader is to take this as a brief sample, among many, how Mr. Lovegood examined some of the children ; and as an illustration of what he conceived to be the wisest way to impress the truths of religion on their young minds. He was well convinced that a mere catechism, enforced upon a child's memory by painful exertions, however good in its place, was likely to produce but a slender effect, without a more familiar method of instruction ; administered according to the ability and disposition of each child. After a considerable time being employed in examining several of the girls, as well as the boys, they were all led through the park to Brookfield-Hall, where they found a bountiful, but plain feast pro-

vided for them, with plenty of pies and puddings for the children.

Supper being ended, the following hymn was sung.

CHRIST'S CARE FOR HIS LAMBS.

Let praise to our Shepherd begin,  
Who tenderly makes us his care ;  
Who came to redeem us from sin,  
And guard us from every snare.  
His pastoral love we adore,  
Who clasps in so dear an embrace,  
The souls that his mercy implore,  
To save them by infinite grace.  
Nor shall the poor lambs of his flock  
Want pasture, or clear running stream ;  
Or shadow of sheltering rock,  
Or warmth of enlivening beam :  
He too in his bosom shall bear  
The weary that pant for his rest ;  
No lamb of them all but shall share  
A heaven of love in his breast.  
Then helpless and weak as we are,  
O let us for ever abide !  
Close under the eye of his care,  
Feed all the long day at his side !  
He will not a moment depart ;  
O why from his side should we rove ;  
Or grieve his compassionate heart,  
So plenteous in mercy and love !

After this, young Mr. Merryman, by Mr. Lovegood's desire, concluded the festivity with a tender and affectionate prayer, while his heart was much impressed with the recollection of what a different course he once pursued, before by Mr. Lovegood's ministry, he was brought to " know the grace of God in truth."

After these services were ended in the afternoon, the Farmer and his family were next ushered into the parlour to tea. Miss Polly and Miss Patty con-

tinued to expose themselves by pretending to talk about fashions, and by making use of fine words, which they ill understood; while Mr. Lovegood constantly aimed at giving a more profitable turn to the conversation, which was easily done between the Farmer and Miss Nancy. Henry's conversion, and the fears and hopes concerning his return, still engrossed the substance of all he had to say; the anxiety of his heart for his beloved Henry, being now the first subject on every occasion. On their return home, Miss Polly and Miss Patty had enough to do in finding fault with each other, respecting manners and dress, and such trifling subjects; while the simple, yet profitable conversation between the Farmer, Miss Nancy, and Thomas, proved their hearts were truly fixed on "the one thing needful." Thomas however, had abundance of fault to find with himself, being full of fears lest the condescending familiarity of the 'Squire had thrown him off his guard; he being unacquainted with the unaffected simplicity and real *courtesy* of his own manners, was not sensible that the best Christian, is the best gentleman all over the world.



## DIALOGUE X.

### THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.

---

FARMER LITTLEWORTH, HIS SON HENRY, MR. LOVE-GOOD, AND OTHERS.

**H**ENRY LITTLEWORTH was detained at sea by contrary winds three weeks longer than was expected. Many reports having prevailed of storms and shipwrecks, the Farmer's mind was filled with sad apprehensions respecting the fate of his son; the subject of his daily talk, and now the object of his most affectionate regard. At length the happy morning came when he arrived at Mr. Vintner's, of the George; and according to the plan preconcerted, he was directed to Mr. Traffick's of the shop.

After some affectionate salutations, a messenger was immediately sent off to the Farmer; and the reader shall be left to judge what were the joyous feelings of the Parent's mind, on receiving this message. With all possible speed Thomas Newman was sent for, to take the horses and to bring him home; while the Farmer with considerable difficulty, was dissuaded from accompanying him, which would have been the case, notwithstanding his gouty limbs, had it not been for Mrs. Littleworth's peculiar desire, that they might both be at home to receive their returning son. The Farmer having been before advised to prepare his son for these happy events, by writing him a letter; the reader shall next have a copy of that letter, which Mr. Traffick put into Henry's hands as soon as he arrived.

“ MY MOST DEAR CHILD,

‘ FOR sure and certain ; I never shall be able to thank the Lord enough for your letter. Oh ! how I bless his name that he has converted and saved two such wicked sinners as you and I have been : and now our most merciful Savior has visited us with his grace, how happy and joyful shall we be together as soon as you come home ! But I beg and pray of you, my dear child ! when we meet, don’t tell me how wicked you have been to me, or I must tell you how much more wicked I have been to you, in setting you such a bad example. Oh no ! we must never talk to each other about these matters ; for this would so cut me to the heart, as that I shall never be able to stand it ; for as I write, I can scarcely see to go on, because the tears run down my cheeks so fast, while I think of the wonderful love of Christ, which has met with two such vile sinners as we have been : and since he has loved and pardoned us both, how sweetly shall we love and pardon each other !

“ My dear child, that very Mr. Lovegood, which we all used to ridicule so, is the dear man who has brought my soul to God. Nobody can tell what a dear servant of God he is. And I and your sister Nancy go to his Church every Sunday, and he is to meet you at our house, the first day you come home ; and Billy Traffick, a most sweet Christian boy, and who always attends our Church, is to come up to our house with you ; and as you are lame, I shall send a horse for you ; so my dear child, I need write no more, as I hope to see you soon. Your affectionate father,

SIMON LITTLEWORTH.”

The reader must be left to suppose, after Henry had read the letter, what were his feelings on such an unexpected, yet joyful and affecting event. No wonder that under such circumstances he was too

much surprized and affected to speak. After some time, Billy Traffick began the conversation.

*Billy.* Come, come; wipe your eyes, and praise the Lord for his mercies; see what love and grace he has been pouring down upon your family, and upon many more in these parts since you left us.

*Henry.* What! and is my father and my sister Nancy indeed converted to God! And does Mr. Lovegood preach the gospel to poor sinners at Brookfield Church?

*Billy.* Yes indeed, your father by the grace of God, for nearly these two years, has been a wonderfully altered man; and Mr. Lovegood is a most blessed and affectionate Minister of Christ. His manners are so engaging, and his preaching is so spiritual and good, that you cannot conceive what blessed seasons we enjoy, Sunday after Sunday, at Brookfield Church.

*Henry.* Yes, and I remember it was the same man we all used to ridicule and despise. My God! what mercies are these to such a vile wretch as I have been. What between joy and grief, how shall I support it! and how shall I be able to meet my dear father!

*Mr. Traffick.* Mr. Henry, your father has desired that I would mention to you not to say any thing respecting matters which are past, as that will affect him too much. You are to go home as if nothing had happened.

*Henry.* How can that be? I have done enough to make me hate myself, and to be hated of my father all the days of my life; and yet what blessed things have happened since I, a poor prodigal sinner, left his house near four years ago. But are there no signs of grace upon the hearts of my poor mother, and my two other sisters?

*Traff.* I fear not at present; though I am told your mother is not so vehement against your worthy father as formerly; for Mr. Dolittle and Dr. Dronish at first tried to set all the Parish against him.

*Henry.* Why Mr. Traffick were you not bred a dissenter? I thought you always went to Dr. Drémish's meeting.

*Traff.* Yes Mr. Henry; but since God in his gracious providence has sent Mr. Lovegood into these parts, we have been convinced that it is better to follow the gospel than a party. So we have left the meeting, and do not mean to go there again, unless we should have the same Gospel preached there as once was, when old Mr. Trueman was the Minister in my Grandfather's time. Now we all go to Brookfield Church, excepting my old uncle, who says he is determined to live and die in the religion in which he was bred and born.

*Billy.* And we shall hope to see you there next Sunday; yes, and it is Sacrament Sunday, and my father and I always attend the communion. We don't mind about being bred dissenters, provided we can hold communion with the people of God.

*Hen.* Oh! what merciful events are all these! how can I stand it! I have had a thousand fears what my poor father would say to me, for my former bad conduct; then how he would oppose me on account of religion. For though in all other respects I knew the Lord hath inclined my heart to be as obedient as a lamb; yet on a Sunday I was determined to travel, lame as I am, twenty miles a day, provided I could but reach any place of worship, whether at a Church or a meeting of any sort, where I could hear the blessed sound of that Gospel I heard among the poor Negroes in Antigua; but instead of all my fears, God has provided for me all my heart could wish, and almost close to the door. Well, there by the help of God I will go, and to the sacrament too, if Mr. Lovegood will permit me, that we may all give ourselves up entirely to the Lord. But after such a life as mine, do you think he will!

*Billy.* There is no doubt of that; for your letter, which you sent from Antigua, affected him almost as much as it did your father; and he

believes, by the grace of God, your heart is really changed.

*Hen.* O ! how little I thought of such blessed events as these, when I left my father's house, while living in all sorts of sin ; and what will my dear father feel, when he sees his poor prodigal, kneeling by him at that most blessed feast of love ! Yes, there I will go, and at once join myself with the dear children of God, wherever I can find them ; that all may know, that by the grace of God, I am determined to give myself up to lead another life.

[Mr. Traffick is called into the shop, and Will Frolick comes in.]

*Frolick.* [To Mr. Traffick.] Is not Harry Littleworth come from sea ? I hear he is at your house ;--- may'n't I step in and ask him how he does ?

*Traff.* Yes ; but you won't find him the same mad rake now, as when you and he, and the rest of you, kept our town in a perpetual uproar.

*Frol.* Why I have heard that he has received a bad wound, and that since then he has taken a mighty religious turn ; and I wonder at that, when he was such an admirer of Paine's " Age of Reason."

*Traff.* Reason ! what do you mean by reason, while you were all living together like so many madmen ; the downright slaves of your filthy appetites, and abominable desires.

*Frol.* Well, though his father has of late been preaching so much about his wonderful conversion to one and another at Mapleton market, I suppose he is not so grave but what he will shake hands with me, if I go in to see him, for he was a merry fellow when he left us.

*Traff.* You know the old proverb Mr. William, " Be merry and wise ;" but when we were at family prayer, while you, and he, and others, were revelling about the town, and you used to disturb us by rapping at our windows and doors ; if this was a sign that you were merry, it was no evidence that any of



you in those days, were wise. But you may go in to him if you please. My son and he are together. [Frollick goes in.]

*Frol.* Well Harry my lad, how are you? I am glad to see you home again; for we all began to think you were gone to the bottom.

*Hen.* I thank you William; but you must suppose it would have been a terrible sinking to me, if I had gone to the bottom; for you know the horrid state we were both in before I went to sea; neither of us were fit to live in this world or the next.

*Frol.* Why I am told you are become very religious; but as for my part, I had rather stop a little longer first, though sometimes I confess I am a little hip'd, lest OLD COCKY DEATH\* should come a stage or two sooner than I should wish.

*Billy.* Really it is shocking to hear you talk, it is dreadful, when people can scoff even at death itself. You know it was but the other day that young Captain Rakish, my Lord's second son, died, after about three day's illness, of a stoppage in his bowels; and it is well known in what despair and agony he left this world, and what awful things he said to his father, for having encouraged and introduced him in all sorts of sin; and what he said to another young officer, who came to see him just before he died.

*Frol.* Why what did he say?

*Billy.* "I have been assisting with you to conquer the enemies of our king and country, while I have madly suffered myself to be conquered by the enemy of souls." And then he cried, under the greatest agony of mind, "The battle is fought, the battle is fought, the battle is fought; but the victory is lost for ever." I would not have lived and died as he did, for a thousand such worlds as this.

*Frol.* Why I am told he had a hard matter to keep

\* An expression, I am told, in frequent use among the insulters, both of the judgments and mercies of our God

up his spirits at the last. But for all this I should like to live a merry life while I live ; and be a good penitent when I come to die ; and that is my creed. I have no notion of being a *saint* too soon.

*Hen.* My dear William, let me be serious with you. I confess with shame, I have been till of late among the number of those “ fools who make a mock of sin ;” I now grieve to think what a bold hardened profligate I once was ; and how I have corrupted you and others by my bad example. I bless God for the deep sorrow I have felt for my sinful conduct ; but I have never felt any remorse in the blessed service of God. While I lived, as I fear you live, I tried all I could to laugh and joke away my misery : but in all my mirth I carried a gnawing hell within. I was a self-tormentor every moment of my life, and I knew that none of us could bear reflection ; and in what we called our jovial songs, we could blasphemously curse the passing bell for interrupting us, and still continue our rebellious, profane, and filthy conversation ; despising all subordination to the laws of God and man, because, in the height of our wickedness, we could not bear the least restraint. And what were our reflections when we were in our beds ! As to myself, never could I sleep, till I was worn out by my rakish conduct. While I slept I was interrupted by dreams, the most horrid and tormenting ; and when I awoke, I rose with nothing but discontent and disgust against myself. The sight even of my parents was a horror to me ; while the extravagant fruits, of my vile conduct, I dreaded every moment of my life. From this hell of misery I made for myself, I was madly driven into another hell---A man of war. There I saw sin in its horrid perfection, without any of those earthly gratifications to comfort me, which I found in my father’s house, and which I so ungratefully forsook. I now most humbly implore your forgiveness, for the mischief I have done you my dear William, and others by my conduct, and affectionately request you to seek forgiveness from

that most merciful Savior, whose free salvation I must for ever adore in changing the heart, and pardoning the sins of a wretch once so vile. I now live a wonder to myself, that my own wickedness has not procured my eternal ruin. O ! let one who has been your fellow-sinner intreat you to become his fellow-traveller in the blessed ways of God.

[Henry was now so overcome by his own thoughts, that he could say no more, and the dissatisfied rake withdrew. As some time was occupied before the messenger from the Farmer returned, Henry Littleworth partook of an early dinner with the family, which was scarcely ended when Mr. Traffick was called into the shop, and immediately returned.]

*Traff.* Mr. Henry, Thomas Newman is come with the horses---You must get yourself ready immediately.

*Hen.* Thomas Newman !---Why is that the poor man who worked for my Father, and the same whom we used to ridicule on account of his religion ?

*Traff.* Yes ; and a truly good man he is ; he is only gone to the butcher's for a joint of veal, to be roasted for supper ; for your Father says, they must have a piece of the *fatted calf*, that they may all eat and be merry, because you are come home.

*Hen.* What for such a wretch as I ! [Henry weeps and adds,] Oh what a loving, forgiving, uniting spirit, does the grace of Christ create among those, whose hearts have tasted of his love.

[Henry is mounted, and rides home with Thomas, and Billy Traffick walks with them.]

*Hen.* Well Thomas, how does my dear Father and Mother do ?

*Tho.* O master Henry ! my master is very well considering ; but he *takes on* wonderfully at the thoughts of seeing you.

*Hen.* And well he may, when he receives into his house such an ungrateful wretch as I have been !

*Tho.* O no, that is not the cause ; it is because the

Lord has so mercifully met with you, and changed your heart ; aye and it is wonderful how master's heart has been changed by the grace of God since you left us.

*Hen.* Why Thomas, they say Mr. Lovegood is a most faithful and affectionate preacher of the gospel.

*Tho.* Aye that he is, as ever lived : to be sure, he is the finest man in all the world ; and it will do you good to see how my old master stands up in the pew ; and how at times, the tears keep running down his cheeks, while he hears him preach the precious word of life among us poor sinners ; and you can have no *conceivance* what a many good people there are up and down the country ; and how our Church is crowded, Sunday after Sunday ; and what a many abominable wicked sinners have been converted to God, and how happy and loving we all are together.

*Hen.* Why Thomas, I hope I have already felt a thousand times more joy in repenting of sin, than ever I did in committing it. We should know very little what misery means, if we did not make it for ourselves. O ! how many self-tormentors there are, alone through that abominable evil ; and you cannot tell how much ashamed I am to meet my dear Father and Mother on that very account, I have been such a grief and torment to them.

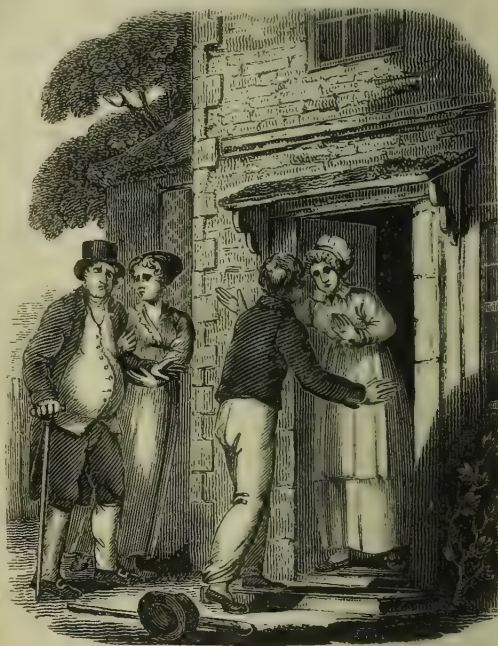
*Tho.* Ah ! but you cannot tell how happy and delighted my dear old master now is, since you first sent him word what the Lord has done upon the heart of his poor prodigal son. He cannot speak of you without tears of joy, and he is himself such an altered man, that he is quite the wonder of all that know him.

*Hen.* And O what a many fears I have had ! lest he would never forgive me, or let me again return to his house. But I am sure if the Lord has pardoned him, he will pardon me.

*Tho.* Why you cannot tell how he has been think-







### RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL.

*Henry.*—Is not that my Father and one of my Sisters coming to meet us?

*Thomas.*—Yes, it is your Father and Miss Nancy. Dear old Gentleman, he is coming out to meet you as the Father came to meet the Prodigal in the Gospel.

At the door of the house Henry was embraced by his Mother: had he not been prevented, he would have been directly upon his knees to have begged her pardon for having given much severer pain to her heart by his conduct, than ever she felt for him as his Mother when she brought him into the world.—*Dialogue X.*

ing of you, and how he is contriving to do all he can to make you happy and comfortable at home; and how busy he has been in fitting up a bed and room on purpose for you.

*Hen.* Why what you tell me seems quite like a dream : it is like coming out of hell into heaven.--- But is not that my Father and my sister Nancy coming to meet us ?

*Tho.* Yes ; it is your Father and Miss Nancy.--- He is coming out to meet you, as the Father came to meet the prodigal in the Gospel. How he has been talking about you, and counting the days till you came home ! for he expected you full a fortnight or three weeks before this.

*Hen.* O what shall I do ! how shall I meet him ! I have done enough to break his heart a thousand times ! I am ashamed to face him ! how he lifts up his hands ! and how he seems to be affected ! dear old man ! Lift me off Thomas---I am so lame. What a meeting this will be ! The Lord support me !

Under such circumstances the newly-converted prodigal and parent met. For a time they both lifted up their voices and almost wept aloud. At the door of the house Henry was next embraced by his mother. Had he not been prevented, he would have been directly upon his knees, to have begged her pardon, for having given much severer pain to her heart by his conduct, than ever she felt for him as his mother, when she brought him into the world : in short, the conversation was too interrupted to be narrated, and too affecting to be described. His sister Nancy next affectionately saluted him, blessing God for the kind providence that had protected him; and above all, for the power of divine grace that had accomplished such wonders upon his heart, while Thomas stood by like a statue, with hands lifted up, and eyes floating in tears ; while he beheld a scene that could not but give the highest satisfaction and delight to a mind like his, which was well

capable of enjoying the luxury of such a scene of love. Miss Polly on the contrary, could scarcely say how do you do ; mentioning with cold indifference that as he was come at last, and hoped he had enough of going to sea, while all the time she completely kept up the character of the elder son in the parable ; she would neither baste the veal, melt the butter, draw the beer, nor even peel a potatoe ; one time she would be crying, “ we shall all be *suffocated* with religion now brother is come home ; ” then again she would be threatening to take herself off, and live with her god-mother, aunt Polly ; manifesting such tempers throughout the evening, as exemplified a complete contrast between the spirit of envy, and that loving spirit which is of God,

We suppose the course of the dialogue to be discontinued for near an hour, and by that time Sam comes up in haste from the vicarage, having been sent as a purpose-messenger to Brookfield, to announce the arrival of Henry to Mr. Lovegood. Mr. Lovegood soon follows, and is introduced.

*Far.* Harry my child, this is our dear Minister who brought your poor Father---to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Loveg.* [To the Farmer.] My good friend, though I rejoice with you on this happy occasion, yet you had need support, that you may rejoice with trembling and with holy moderation. -(To Henry taking him by the hand.) My dear youth, we all most affectionately congratulate you upon your return, and especially on your return to God, and for the good evidence you have given, that a divine change has been wrought on your heart.

*Hen.* Oh Sir ! I hope and trust it has ; for you must know what a wretch I was before I went to sea. I wonder that you can give the right hand of fellowship to such an one as I have been.

*Loveg.* No matter what *has been* ; the Lord I trust “ has cast all those sins behind his back.” Consider,

by the grace of God, what *is and is to be*; for in the gospel the grace of Christ is provided for us in time, and the glory of Christ in eternity.

*Hen.* Sir, I am ashamed to look you in the face, when with the deepest contrition I consider in my wicked wild days, what cruel words I have uttered against you, and what abominable stories I was glad to hear, and even invent, to expose your innocent character. I would beg your pardon a thousand times.

*Loveg.* Oh no, no, we must have no begging of pardons. If God has pardoned us, we can easily forgive each other: but there is nothing new in all this; for Paul, before his conversion, was "injurious and opprobrious;" we therefore who have been crucified with Christ, and who have been "made partakers of the power of his spiritual resurrection," are to suppose, that all our former evils are left behind in the grave from which he arose; they are to be buried and forgotten, as though they had never been.

*Hen.* Oh Sir! how glad shall I be to hear you preach at Brookfield Church, concerning these great things, and about this blessed Christ. And William Traffick tells me it will be Sacrament Sunday; and will you let me be there 'dear Sir?---[To his Father] and will you, my dear Father forgive me, and let me kneel down by you at that blessed feast of love?

*Far.* O my dear child! don't talk so---don't talk so,---it quite breaks my heart---I cannot stand it,---all is forgotten and forgiven already.

Mr. Lovegood, finding that the sluices of affection were opened afresh, and remembering that it was the Father's design to establish family prayer on the return of his son, and that he was expected to introduce that very profitable service into the family, wisely called for the Bible before supper. The Farmer however having invited many of his friends and neighbours to meet with him on this occasion, this

first interview being ended, all the rest of the company were ushered in ; first to partake of the good instruction which Mr. Lovegood had to communicate, and next of the plentiful repast which the Farmer had provided. And these were some of those on whom such a treat was well bestowed ; (Luke xiv. 12, 13, 14.) and who were in good repute with Mr. Lovegood and the Farmer, for the consistency and purity of their conduct. Of this number was Thomas Doubting, and others of his friends and relatives, whose names were Diffidence, and his cousin Mr. Sadheart, they being very upright characters, though of downcast spirits ; while it was thought that such a repast on such an occasion might do them good ; and especially as Mr. Goodhope, and that cheerful Christian old Mr. Honest, were to be of the party ; and with these Mr. Gravity and his friend Mr. Sedate, were to be intermixed with the rest of the company. While it was by the peculiar desire of Mrs. Littleworth, that a poor little harmless thing called Mrs. Creepmouse, a very good character, though little thought of, was invited to be one among the rest, together with some others, all of them being of a good sort, though of very different sorts, which altogether made up such a pleasing variety, that had the Farmer sent me an invitation to sit in a corner with them, though at the distance of fifty miles, old as I am, I should have been most eagerly inclined to have accepted it.

Mr. Lovegood conducted the family worship with his usual ability : his judicious references most affectionately delivered, drew tears from almost every eye, which probably would have been more abundant, had he pursued his original plan, for once he thought of reading and illustrating the 15th of Luke, on the Prodigal's return, but he discreetly forbore, knowing that the feelings of the family upon an event so similar, were already excited to the utmost.---He chose therefore the 14th of Hosea, as being very congenial to that



broken and contrite spirit, which was now exemplified among them.

After prayer the supper was soon introduced, hospitable and plain. Four full grown fowls, two roasted and two boiled, a large leg of mutton and turnips, and a fat ham, with plenty of vegetables, besides puddings and pies, which were added to the piece of the fatted calf already brought from Mapleton. The Farmer having invited so many of his neighbours to this first family prayer, on such an occasion, chose that the provision should be as plentiful for those in the kitchen, as well as those in the parlour; And now "they began to be merry;" and this prompted the Farmer to propose a verse of a hymn during the repast.

YE heavens rejoice  
In Jesus's grace,  
Let earth make a noise  
And echo his praise;  
Break forth into singing,  
Ye trees of the wood,  
For Jesus is bringing  
Lost sinners to God.

Miss Nancy pitched the tune, and though the Farmer had a strange rough voice, so that he could not sing, yet he was determined in his way, to *make a joyful noise unto the Lord*, and so it was that even this added a pleasing variety to the happy feast.

One affecting circumstance however, happened during the festivity. The Farmer seeing his son's plate nearly emptied, loaded it a second time with what would have satisfied a moderate man for three meals at least, and then plentifully drenched it with melted butter. This act of hospitable affection from the father, again touched the feelings of the son; he looked down upon his plate, thus heaped with a Benjamin's mess, and wept. Mr. Lovegood called him aside, advising him for a while to withdraw from the

company ; and they walked and conversed together for some minutes in a large old hall, while Mr. Lovegood thus attempted the word of consolation.

*Loveg.* My dear youth, it grieves us all to see you so cast down, on an occasion which calls for so much thankfulness and joy.

*Hen.* Oh Sir ! what an ungrateful and rebellious wretch have I been against my parents, and above all against my God, all the days of my life ! till just of late.

*Loveg.* Whatever you may have been, yet of this you may most assuredly be persuaded, that now all your past offences your father has entirely forgiven ; and has again and again desired me to assure you, that he means to look upon you as if nothing had ever happened to offend him.

*Hen.* [Weeping still more abundantly.] O Sir ! that is the very thing which cuts me to the heart ; --- not that I suspect my father to be unforgiving ; but that I should have been such an ungrateful wretch to grieve such a kind and tender-hearted parent. If he has forgiven me, how is it possible that I can forgive myself !

[After a little while, Henry's spirits were recruited ; when he and Mr. Lovegood returned to the parlour. The supper being ended, the feast was removed into the kitchen, that the Farmer's servants and some of his Laborers might partake of the remainder. Afterwards the conversation thus continued.]

*Loveg.* Well Mr. Henry, you can now tell us a little more than what we find in your letter, of God's gracious dealings with your soul.

*Hen.* Why Sir, if all the world had told me that I should have experienced such a blessed change, I could not have believed them.

*Loveg.* Were you filled with much despondency when you first saw the evil tendency of sin ?

*Hen.* Why Sir just at first, I had a considerable degree of terror, but soon afterwards I was not so

much distressed from an apprehension that there was a hell *for* sin: through divine mercy, it was a hell *in* sin, that I then began to fear.

*Loveg.* Much better fear the commission of sin itself, than the punishment that sin deserves. But had you not any concern about your soul till after you were wounded?

*Hen.* Not the least---I am astonished at my wickedness till I was brought, as I supposed, close to the gates of death. Then I began framing to my mind, that an angry God was looking at me, and that he hated me: then sin began to flash upon my conscience; and many evils which I had forgotten, were brought to my mind, as if I had committed them but the day before. Nothing made me fear hell but sin, and now I saw sin worse than hell itself.

*Loveg.* And how did you get relief?

*Hen.* Why Sir, through the kind providence of God, there were three poor despised praying seamen on board the same ship, and while I continued groaning in my hammock, they ventured to come near me, when all the ship's crew expected every hour to hear of my death; and when I began to tell them of my evil heart, and evil plight, they seemed quite to rejoice at it. This appeared strange to me at the first, but they soon gave me to understand, that there was no coming to Christ but with a wounded conscience. And then I was directed to seek to him for mercy, while his salvation was my only hope.

*Loveg.* Indeed and so it is; for nothing but redemption will do for a ruined sinner. When we come to know our own hearts, we are soon delivered from trusting in ourselves, and on our own fancied righteousness; but from the knowledge of your personal wickedness no doubt, you could not have any fancy of that sort.

*Hen.* Ah Sir! as soon as ever I felt that I was a ruined sinner, I was fully convinced that Christ alone must be exalted in my salvation. I had no other hope left but in him.

*Loveg.* Had you no serious apprehensions during the time of the engagement, while your eternal state seemed to depend upon the fate of every moment?

*Hen.* Not the least. And when a poor profane wretch died but a little before, of a mortification, through a broken leg, by his falling down the hatch-way; I could even hear him all the time curse and swear, because, as he thought, he was not properly attended to while he lay in his hammock; and when he was told that his leg was in a state of mortification, he sunk into despair; and even to his last moments, used the most horrid imprecations against his own parents for sending him to sea, and for introducing him into all sorts of sin.

*Far.* O my dear child! what a mercy that my bad example was not the cause of your eternal ruin.

*Hen.* But blessed be God father, that is not the case: in a way of wonderful mercy the Lord has met with us both. Come let us be thankful, and bless the Lord together for his love.

*Far.* With all my heart, my dear child. [He takes him by the hand, falls upon his neck, and embraces him most affectionately. The company were much affected, but Mr. Lovegood wisely interrupted them by again resorting to the voice of praise. He paused awhile and gave out the following lines, they being the extemporaneous production of his pious and fertile mind.

ALL praise to the Saviour, whose grace from above,  
Unites us in one in affection and love;  
Our sins that are pass'd are all buried with him,  
Who rose from the grave a lost world to redeem.  
'The Lion and Tiger, high praise to his name,  
Partake of a nature as mild as the Lamb:  
All evils before the dear Saviour must fly,  
When taught by his Spirit on him to rely.

Then tun'd be our voices, at Jesus's name,  
While aloud his rich mercy and grace we proclaim:  
Forgiven by him we're united in one,  
And ascribe all the glory to Jesus alone.

After the hymn, Mr. Lovegood further diverted the subject by adding,

*Loveg.* But Mr. Henry, you are to tell us the rest of your story.

*Hen.* Why, as soon as I began to be better, I joined those praying people, and at once partook with them, their lot of ridicule and contempt. We were all despised as the meanest fellows in the ship, though in the time of the engagement they had proved themselves the boldest men among us all.

*Loveg.* No wonder at that: living Christians need not be afraid to die, because they who live and believe in Christ, can never die. But when you came to Antigua, how was it with you there?

*Hen.* Sir, the providence of God most favorably and graciously attended me; for as soon as I arrived, I and my comrades in prayer sought after any who were inclined to seek after God; and by a remarkable providence, the town being very full, I found myself quartered at the hut of a poor slave, who "knew the grace of God in truth." I could not from the first but admire his mild submission, and kind attention. But before he went to sleep, how was I struck to hear the poor creature say in their language! "My dear Massy, *me* hope you *no* be angry if *me* and my poor *wifey* and *pickaninnies*, pray to our dear Savior before we go to bed:" and when I told him that I had lately been taught to pray myself, and should be glad to pray with him; he asked me, "What Massy! you love our dear Savior too?" And when I told him I hoped I did; for that he had pardoned my sins, and changed my heart; he came immediately and embraced me and said, "O my dear *Broder!* *den* I love you to *de* heart, because you love our dear Savior;" and after this as you may suppose, we soon got acquainted with each other.

*Loveg.* I suppose when you got acquainted with this poor good creature, he soon introduced you to the rest of his brethren?

*Hen.* Yes; and I went immediately and told my



praying shipmates what a treasure I had found in this poor slave ; and the night after, we all met for prayer in his hut ; and when we asked him how he came to know about these good things, he told us the most affecting story I ever heard, of his sufferings before he came from Africa, and how mercifully he was brought to the knowledge of the truth, by the zeal and attention of the Moravian missionaries, some years after he had lost his liberty, and been sold as a slave.

*Loveg.* Well Mr. Henry, as we shall now I trust, have frequent interviews with each other, I should be glad if on a future occasion you could recollect some of the most material circumstances of his story, for the narration of them may be profitable to us all ; but I dare say, soon after that, you got acquainted with their Ministers.

*Hen.* Why directly poor Sancho, for that was his name, could find time, he went and told their minister, that there were some *buckra*\* sailors that loved the Savior, and the venerable grey-headed man soon came to see us ; and as I had then but lately been awakened to a sense and sight of my sins, the remembrance of them at times laid very heavy on my conscience ; and I bless God for the consolations I soon began to receive from the affectionate and tender way in which he recommended me to the Son of God for salvation. On the Sunday following we all went to their Chapel. It was a most affecting sight to behold so large a number of poor blacks, notwithstanding their slavery, rejoicing in the liberty of the gospel.

*Loveg.* Blessed be God, the calamities of a Christian, shall always be counter-balanced by his consolations ; it is the privilege of the believer, notwithstanding all his troubles, “ to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

*Hen.* And so it should seem Sir, for during the

\* The name given by the Africans to a white person.

week, Sancho took us to see a poor woman singing and rejoicing in dying circumstances, in a manner remarkably glorious; crying out, "My dear Savior is just coming for me---he has loved me--- he has given himself for me! O! how he warms my heart, and blesses me---death is now *noting* to me: how I long to be dissolved, that I may be with my precious Jesus! and how I love all of you, my dear *broders*, because you love him. In Heaven we shall *no* be cruel against each *oder*, but we shall all be like our loving Savior, and see him as he is in all his glory." Thus she went on, praising and blessing God, and triumphing in the forgiving love of Christ.

*Loveg.* Well Mr. Henry, we shall have other opportunities to talk over these matters; but as it begins to be late we should not conclude this joyful interview, without some further praises to God for his great goodness, in returning you again to your Father's house, and bringing you to the knowledge of yourself.

*Hen.* O Sir! what an ungrateful wretch should I be, to forget my God after such mercies.

*Far.* My child, you cannot think what a *nice* hymn Mr. Lovegood has made on your conversion and return. And I am sure we cannot praise the Lord too much for all his mercies. Nancy call in Thomas Newman, that he may pitch the tune.

[Thomas comes in and the Farmer thus addresses him.]

*Far.* Well Thomas, have you had victuals enough in the kitchen?

*Tho.* Thank the Lord, though there has been such a plenty of company, yet we had plenty of victuals, and there is plenty to spare.

*Far.* Much good may it do you all, for I never made a *joyfuller* feast in all my *born days*: Tho' I have sought after merriment in the world's ways, yet never, never before, had I such a joyful day as this.

*Mrs. Littlew. to her husband.* Well master, I must say, I never was at such a feast at our house before, and all the company is heartily welcome. I shall

never make such cruel speeches as I have done, to you. And Harry my dear child, I forgive all that is past, from the bottom of my heart.

This acknowledgment again greatly affected the Farmer and Henry, so that Mr. Lovegood desired Thomas would pitch the tune directly ; but poor Henry's harp was yet on the willows ; the case expressed in the hymn was so much his own, that every line brought a fresh tear trickling down his penitential cheeks.

#### THE PENITENT'S SONG OF PRAISE.

Did ever one of Adam's race,  
Cost thee, dear Lord, such toil and grace  
Ere this rebellious heart of mine  
Was taught to yield to love divine ?

Vile was my heart, deep plung'd in sin,  
A dismal den of thieves within ;  
Where every lust presum'd to dwell,  
The hateful progeny of hell.

A deep apostate from my God,  
I trampled on the Savior's blood :  
I scorn'd his mercy, mock'd his pain,  
And crucified my Lord again.

How great his pow'r, how vast the sway,  
That first constrain'd me to obey !  
How large the grace thou didst impart,  
That conquer'd sin and won my heart !

But lo ! the chief of sinners now  
Is brought before thy throne to bow :  
Surely this mighty power from thee,  
Can conquer all which conquers me.

Hail, dearest Lord, my choicest love !  
By pity drawn from realms above :  
Eternal praise to Love Divine,  
That won a heart so vile as mine.

The hymn being ended, Mr. Lovegood offered up another short prayer, and the whole family retired.

## DIALOGUE XI.

### THE EVILS OF THE SLAVE TRADE DELINEATED



REV. MR. LOVEGOOD AND MR. WORTHY'S FAMILY, AT  
FARMER LITTLEWORTH'S.

**A**BOUT three weeks after Henry's return, Mr. Worthy, mindful of Farmer Littleworth's invitation, attended with Mrs. Worthy and their eldest daughter, for a tea repast at Gracehill Farm. It has already been noticed, that all correspondence between Mr. Worthy and the family of the Bluster's of Revel Hall, was completely closed. Nor could he keep up any further intimacy with Lord Rakish's family, than to give them a morning visit after their return from Town, or some other places of dissipation. A man of his superior mind could discover, that while the scriptures directed him to be *courteous*, yet, knowing that "evil communications corrupt good manners," he was also instructed to be *cautious*. His maxim was "to be civil to the great, but intimate with the good." He therefore never supposed he disgraced himself by a familiar intercourse with persons of inferior rank, while they sustained the character of real goodness of disposition and conduct. Mr. Lovegood, as we naturally suppose, was invited to be one of the party. Mrs. Lovegood, ever attentive to her domestic concerns, and burthened with the *large* care of a *little* family, though the sincere wish of all parties, could seldom attend on these occasions.

Mr. and Mrs. Worthy, and Mr. Lovegood made it

a point to come early, as they wished for some conversation with the newly converted prodigal, as also to gain some information respecting the poor negroes in Antigua. After the accustomed salutations, they were ushered by the Farmer and his wife into the best parlour, where Miss Nancy had been preparing all things for their reception; and thus the conversation began:

*Far.* Ah dear! had any one told me three years ago, that I should have had such an honor as to have our worthy 'Squire and his lady at our house, I could never have believed them, when I used to laugh at your honor's religion: but the Lord knows, it was when I had none of my own.

*Wor.* Well, but you know my good friend, we were all nearly alike, till we were better instructed. But where is your son Henry? for we are come to hear something of the gracious providences which have brought about this wonderful change upon his mind; and which have attended him ever since he left these parts in his thoughtless days.

*Far.* He is only gone out with Thomas and Sam, to see your honor's horses put properly into the stable: but for sure it is to *admiration* what a blessed boy he is, and how loving and good the Lord has made him: it quite overcomes me when I think of it. We seem to enjoy a little heaven upon earth.

*Loveg.* They who are born again, are born to enjoy two heavens instead of one: a heaven of grace here, and a heaven of glory hereafter. But through the mercy of God, what a wonderful alteration has taken place in your family, when compared to what it was not long ago, when you were all living without God in the world.

*Far.* Aye; so I thought last Tuesday evening, when my son and Billy Traffick, and three or four other young men that frequent our Church, came and spent the evening at our house; and Billy Traffick brought with him the Pilgrim's Progress. What a



precious book for sure that is ! and they say the man that wrote it was nothing but a poor tinker ; Aye, and a very wicked sinner, outwardly *wickeder* than ever I was, before the Lord converted him.

*Loveg.* Yes and what a proof is this of the efficacy of divine grace on the vilest of sinners ; as also of the wisdom which God can communicate to his children, independent of human learning, however good that may be in its place. But that book is not less entertaining than instructive. Happy are they who find they are travelling with the pilgrim towards the celestial city !

*Far.* Well I do trust that some of us have got into that blessed road ; though to my mind I *hobble* as bad spiritually as I do naturally. But how Harry was affected when he read about Christian's burden falling off his back, when he came within sight of the cross. Dear child ! what a tender heart he has. The Lord make my heart as tender as his ! And for sure what two sweet prayers we had from Billy Traffick, and my son, before they went away ! and to hear such prayers from such a sinner's lips as he once was, is beyond all my admiration.

[Henry's appearance in the parlour prevented any further conversation on that subject. After some salutations the dialogue recommenced.]

*Wor.* Well Mr. Henry, we are come somewhat sooner than expected, to commemorate the goodness of God in your conversion and return. We shall be very glad soon to dispatch the ceremonies of the tea-table, that we may have time to hear of some further events than what we were acquainted with, before your arrival.---[To the Farmer.] But Mr. Littleworth, where are your other two daughters, Miss Polly and Miss Patty ?

*Far.* 'Las Sir ! I am afraid they think they are not yet dressed fine enough to receive your honor, as you came a little sooner than I expected, but not sooner your honor, than you were wished for. Ah dear ! how glad should I be if my daughters

spent but half the time in meditation and prayer, that they now spend at their *twilight*. There is no *conceivance* what pride there is in all our wicked hearts, till it is rooted out by the grace of God.---[Mrs. Worthy and family smile ; the Farmer continues]---Why I thought I should make some blunders in my *countrified fashion* of talk ; but my daughters have put a sort of a *petticoat thing* round their table, and I thought they called it a *twilight* ; but my father loved his money too well, to give us much *larning*.

*Mrs. Wor.* Never mind my good friend, the mistake of calling a toilette a *twilight* : we all understand you.

[Just then Miss Polly and Miss Patty came down from their *twilight*, and such curious tawdry figures as might be expected. Miss Polly being the eldest, did the honors of the tea table, when she had enough to do to instruct Sam, primed up in his livery, how to conduct himself in his office as footman, the conversation having been interrupted by their appearance, was thus resumed.]

*Loveg.* Mr. Henry we have already been acquainted with many of the circumstances, which first brought about the blessed change that has taken place upon your mind, though we have heard but little from you of what passed when you were in Antigua, after you became acquainted with the Moravians. Besides Mr. Worthy is a subscriber to their mission, as also to other missionary societies, lately established in our own country : he would therefore be glad of a further narration of what has come to your knowledge respecting these good people, and of their efforts to evangelize the our slaves.

*Hen.* Oh Sir, blessed be God, I have seen in them what I humbly trust I have felt in myself. What the grace of God can do when it rules in the heart, is unspeakably glorious ; what a deal of difference there is between the mock Christianity of the world, and the real Christianity of the word of God !

*Loveg.* Indeed there is Mr. Henry, and we never

can be sufficiently thankful to God, who has made us to know the difference, no one needs to tell us what the true religion of the gospel is after we have felt it.

*Wor.* It is to be hoped then, that you can give us a better account of the Christianity in the chapels of these negroes, than what I fear is to be found at Mapleton Church.

*Hen.* Indeed Sir, the diligence and attention exhibited towards these poor creatures by their Ministers, is exceedingly affectionate and praise-worthy ; and they are well repaid by the love they bear to their Ministers in return ; who with the greatest tenderness, preach to them, the merciful love of God our Savior towards mankind, and the tender love we ought to shew to each other for the Savior's sake ; their perpetual theme, is the sufferings of Christ, and the Christian tempers these should produce in us.

*Loveg.* If the love of Christ will not subdue our vile tempers towards each other, nothing else will.

*Hen.* It is really surprising what wonders of grace have been accomplished among them ! Instead of living like a set of savages, in all their public meetings it appeared to me, that the love of Christ had made them all as one, like a swarm of bees fixing around the queen bee of the hive, they hang as one upon her : her life is their life, and her death is their death ; and just such is their uncommon attachment to their Ministers, while all of them are drawn into the obedience of the gospel, by the silken cords of real affection, which they have neither power nor inclination to resist.

*Loveg.* And so we should all cleave around the blessed person of our Lord : all our life is in him, and all our fresh spirings are from him. But as there is a considerable difference among us, so I suppose there must be the same among them ; we all have evidence enough that there are different degrees of grace on earth, and some have consequently concluded that there will be different degrees of glory above.

*Hen.* Yes Sir, and so it certainly is among them, but taking them as a body, they always appeared to me as a set of artless sheep, seeking the protection of the attentive shepherd ; they are never happy but as they can get near their Ministers, and seem to place the most implicit, yet not less willing confidence in all their instructions for their good.

*Loveg.* May Christ, the good Shepherd of his sheep, be made as dear to us as he is to them, and we shall all find the good of it. So far as you have hitherto related matters, we have reason to bless God, that he has over-ruled the evils of the slave trade to so many of this unhappy race : though I am told they are sad sufferers from the hard hand of oppression, under which they have been made to groan.

*Wor.* Though I have no doubt of the authenticity of the reports we have received from every quarter, respecting the cruelties exercised over these miserable creatures, yet I should be glad of your information concerning the general state of the poor African slaves, so far as it comes within the reach of your personal knowledge.

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[This question brought on a long detail of all those abominable cruelties which existed in Africa and the West India Islands, before the abolition of that *accursed* traffic, and which were narrated in the former editions of this publication : but as these are less interesting since the abolition with us, although a continuation of it in some Popish countries, (always the last in reformation,) is still to be lamented ; an abridgment of them may be judged sufficient to satisfy the readers mind. First as it respects the multitudes that were torn from their native soil, and doomed to perpetual slavery, these were reported to be awfully numerous ; not less than *forty thousand* for the use of the British colonies only, and as many more for the supply of other nations. That many thousands of

these were known to die of broken hearts, or as the slave traders call it, *of the sulks*; being torn away from their nearest and dearest friends and relatives upon earth; or if they fell not a sacrifice to the grief of their own minds, being taken from a life of comparative ease and indolence, they were *murdered* by cruel usage, or as the monsters who possess them, express themselves, *die in seasoning*; so that to make up the full number of effective slaves, not less than A HUNDRED THOUSAND have been carried off from their native land, year after year, to keep up the stock of those who were *worked down*, and left to perish by inches under the cruel lash of their merciless drivers; whereas, had they been treated with the same humanity as the peasantry of every country ought to expect from those who employ them, their increase among themselves would have been fully proportionate to all our wants on that score; but instead of this humane and sound policy, we had to replenish our loss of slaves, murdered by our cruelty towards them, by hovering like a set of vultures after their prey, on the coasts of Africa; that by kidnapping, exciting sham wars among their petty kings, before we could accomplish our end, we had to murder as many more; and that by the long continuance of this horrid traffic, carried on by different European nations, there are now not less than A MILLION of our fellow creatures, in a state of the most abject slavery, while the lives that were sacrificed to procure them, must have been incalculably greater still.

The reader however, is to understand, that though the importation of slaves into our West India colonies is now prohibited, yet that slavery itself subsists, though the condition of these poor creatures is much meliorated thereby, and though we have renounced this accused traffic, yet while any other nations still continue it, murdered and enslaved Africans, will be groaning under the hard hand of oppression in different quarters of the globe.

On this account, the reader will scarcely allow me



to omit all the affecting stories, that Henry Littleworth brought forward on this subject, that we may ourselves be humbled for our former guilt, and that the trade, wherever it exists, may be held up in perpetual abhorrence among all those who have a spark of humanity in their hearts.

The conversation upon this subject continued for a considerable time, while the tender and sympathetic tear was frequently ready to start at the narration of such events, as must melt and wound the hearts of all those who have been softened by the grace and love of God : had not the fertile tongue of Miss Polly, which was much more loquacious than that of Miss Patty's, attempted to give another turn to the conversation on every occasion, which she ill knew how to manage ; she being unhappily possessed of a deal of conceit, little sense, and no grace. At one time it was whether his honor's or madam's tea was sweet enough, and to their liking ; giving them to understand that it was the best that could be got at Mr. Traffick's shop ; then the company were urged to be free with the toast and butter, as though they were half starved, and never partook of such a tea feast before ; while every now and then, poor Sam partook of a *slice* of her oratory, being unaccustomed to wait on such extraordinary occasions.

But what was most provoking, during a solemn pause, created by the affecting narrative of her brother, Miss Polly addresses Mrs. Worthy, who was a native of Lancashire, what she thought of the Lancashire witches : and when an attempt was made to suppress this idle talk, it proved all in vain, for her immediate reply was, that her aunt was of the same opinion about witches as herself, and that their red cow, which died about last candelmas, must have been bewitched, as the cow doctor could do her no good ; and therefore probably with a little art gave it as his opinion, that such was really the case, as her flesh twitched upon her body in such an extraordinary manner. Mr. Lovegood unfortunately said that spasms were not

uncommon diseases, either on the human or brutal frame. This however, by no means satisfied Miss Polly, who rather wondered that Mr. Lovegood, being a *master of arts*, should know no better; and though all this was certainly an alloy to a very serious and profitable evening's conversation; yet it produced a strong contrast between minds, ill furnished under the power of vanity and pride; and the minds of those who are under the influences of the mind of God.

## DIALOGUE XII.

### THE EVILS OF THE SLAVE TRADE FARTHER DELINFATED.

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THE conversation having thus far occupied the attention and time of the company, the tea-table was cleared, fresh coals were put upon the fire, the hearth was swept up, the curtains were let down, the mould candles, bought on purpose for this occasion, were lighted, Miss Polly having put a very nice piece of fringed paper round the bottoms of them, on account of their fine company ; and thus the conversation recommenced.

*Wor.* Pray Mr. Henry, were you ever at a public sale of slaves, after they were landed from the coasts ?

*Hen.* Yes Sir, I was at two of them, and horrid sights they were.

*Wor.* Do let us hear a little on that subject.

*Hen.* As it is well known what a broken-hearted and dejected set they all are, the slave dealer is under the necessity of using every art to set them off to the best of his power, and to make them look as cheerful as he can, by flattering promises, and by dressing, cleaning, and oiling them, to give them a youthful look ; while their purchasers, with the utmost indifference, examined them one after another, as people would a parcel of horses at a fair, for the tricks of horse jockies in this country are not to be compared to the tricks of a set of *slave jockies* in the West Indies. Yes, and they talked of a *damaged* slave, as we do of a *damaged* horse ; while some of them wanted *working slaves*, and others of them *breeding*

*slaves.* All the children born in slavery are not according to the law of nature, the property of their parents, but of their owners. And what is more brutish and abominable still, when these planters and their overseers have children by these poor negroes, instead of having any regard to the offspring of their vicious passions, they will suffer even these their own children, to be bred up in slavery like others.

*Mrs. Wor.* How distressful to the parents to bring up their children for such purposes; but I suppose you had some terrible scenes of woe exhibited before you, during these wretched sales?

*Hen.* Madam, the sight of some of them was enough to break one's heart; how could it be otherwise? to see nearest relatives torn from each other, which was too frequently, though not universally the case; by denying them the privilege of working together upon the same plantation. Among instances of this sort; I remember seeing a man and his wife, each of them I suppose between thirty and forty, and two fine looking boys, the one about twelve, the other I should judge two years younger, all one family, who were taken captives in one of their horrid *sham* wars. And in order to keep them from having the *sulks*, it seems it was promised them that they should all be *sold in one lot*; but the trader having met with a rich planter, who wanted some hearty boy slaves; finding he could make the best bargain of them by selling them separate, had them all four at a distance from the rest: soon afterwards a *conductor*\* came to drag the purchased children from their parents. As soon as they perceived this cruel separation was determined; the whole family ran into each other's arms, and embraced one another in such a manner, as that they could scarcely be torn asunder. At length the boys were compelled to go to the destined place of their slavery, while the pa-

\* The reader is desired to notice, what soft expressions are invented to take off the odium from the agents of this horrid traffic.

rents appeared like two creatures perfectly distracted with grief; for they had now lost their last miserable consolation through life, that they might only live and die together, though in a state of cruel slavery. But I saw another scene of the like sort, that affected me more than either of the former.

*Far.* Well well, to be sure it is most *dreadful* bad. - I wonder that his Majesty has not put it all down long ago; for they say, (God bless him!) he is as good sort of a gentleman in himself, as ever lived, and that he loves to make every one happy that is about him.

*Loveg.* [smiling.] O but the king cannot act without the consent of his parliament; otherwise I dare say, had he his own will in this respect, he would have made others as happy as himself.

*Far.* Aye, so I dare say, for they say he speaks *mighty good naturdly* to every body, and that he diverts himself by doing something in our way. Now I like him wonderfully for that.

*Wor.* And so do I too, for I think it bespeaks a simplicity and goodness of disposition, which would be an ornament to the greatest monarch upon the earth; and why should not a king divert himself as he likes best? I am sure a little farming is both innocent and instructive. Indeed I know not what His Majesty could better patronize, as the strength and wealth of the nation so much depends upon it. Better be fond of the plough, than the play-house.

*Far.* Well, I wish with all my heart your honor had but been one of our *parliament men* for Mapleton; you would have given them to know the rights of it; there was a *main bustle* made against these wicked ways some time ago, but that did not *wind up* so well as it should.

*Wor.* Indeed if it had been in my power to remove these evils, it would have been done long ago; but as it is a difficult thing to get into parliament with a clear conscience, through the drunkenness and wickedness which in general abound at the time



of an election, I had rather spend my days in retirement; and do some little good among my neighbours in the country, than waste half my time in London, in attending parliament. [To Henry.] But Mr. Henry, we must see if we cannot muster up courage to hear your other story.

*Hen.* Oh Sir! as I was looking on - upon these miserable creatures, I saw a poor girl among the rest sobbing and crying in the deepest distress; and at last, she quite fainted away. The captain ordered her to be carried off to a distance. A young man slave, who was standing by, was not less affected than herself; and he it seems, was brought over from the same country about three years before. Seeing the young woman in that condition, he fell down at the feet of the man who had the care of her, and kissed them several times, begging, as for his life, that he might go and speak to her. At length he was permitted. He ran to her with astonishing eagerness, embraced and kissed her several times, crying out, O my sister Ora! O my dear sister Ora! I was so affected by this scene, that I had it upon my mind sleeping and waking, for several nights and days afterwards.

*Mrs. Wor.* Indeed Mr. Henry, these are very affecting tales; but do you know what became of them afterwards?

*Hen.* Why Madam, as soon as the captain's man, who had the care of the young woman, perceived that she and the young man were brother and sister, although inured to these scenes of misery, he could not help dropping a tear or two of compassion with the rest of us. After the girl was somewhat recovered they were left to converse together. The farther particulars of this history I could not learn, but I'll warrant it was tragical enough. After this however, the case was made known to the owner, when according to the true spirit of the trade, lest the brother and sister should both of them *take the sulks*, so as to endanger their labor, or perhaps the loss of their

lives by their mutual grief for each other, it was determined it should be contrived, if possible, that they might both live together on the same plantation. After some difficulty, it seems this was accomplished, and when they were informed of this event, to see how they leapt for joy; how they embraced and kissed each other, while they went along arm in arm to the plantation, which was to be the destined place of their labor, was not a less affecting scene than the former.

*Loveg.* But oh! what must the parents of these two affectionate creatures have felt on the loss of such children! [To Mr. Worthy.] What should you and I feel Sir, if we were to be bereaved of our children in such an unmerciful manner?

*Far.* Well well, if I should be ashamed to treat my dogs or horses as these men treat their fellow creatures; and I can assure your honor, that though for many years I have been such a *neglectful* sinner about the state of my soul; yet I never could bear to see any dumb creatures in misery. Ah! many and many a time, in my youthful days, have I sit up half the night when a cow was likely to calve. Aye, and the poor oxen, because I love to take notice of them and feed them, and give them a pat when they come home from plough; it is to *admiration* how well they know me, and how fond they seem to be of me; and I have felt more of this since I have known the Lord, than ever I did before.

*Mrs. Littlew.* To be sure our master is very tender about dumb creatures; he would not let our old house dog Watch, be killed for ever so long a time, though he got so dirty and nasty; and then he would send to the *doctor's* for some strong *sleeping stuff*, that he might not know when he died.

*Loveg.* Well Mrs. Littleworth, this is a full proof of the excellency of real Christianity; nothing like the love of Christ to soften our hard hearts, and fill us with universal love, not only towards each other, but also to every creature of God that is innocent and useful in its kind.

*Wor.* Indeed Mr. Henry, your stories are almost too much for us all.

*Hen.* And by all accounts these are by no means the worst of it.

*Wor.* What can be worse than this ?

*Hen.* Why Sir, you know that I mentioned to you, that there was a little lot of serious sailors on board the same ship, in which I was entered as captain's clerk, and one of these was engaged from on board an African slave ship.

*Wor.* It is very surprising that a serious sailor should have been found on board one of these slave ships.

*Hen.* Sir, he was as wicked as any of the rest of us, when he first entered into that service, but by a kind providence on his second voyage to Africa, a religious uncle put into his hands a Bible, Allen's Alarm to the Unconverted, and Mr. Newton's Narrative ; who was once employed in the slave trade ; and the contents of these books, were so powerfully brought home to his mind, that he was made to abhor himself, abhor his occupation, to love his Bible, and earnestly to seek for the salvation of his soul ; after that no one knows how the groans and sighs and miseries of these poor creatures used to cut him to the heart, so that he was determined, as soon as ever he set his foot upon the British shore, to relinquish that blood-thirsty traffic, to the day of his death.

*Loveg.* Certainly no one after he has become a new creature in Christ Jesus, and who consequently has " put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies and kindness," could ever abide in a calling so contrary to the mind of Christ. But I must not interrupt you in your story. By what providence was he afterwards cast into your way ?

*Hen.* Just about that time, the war broke out again, and he was pressed before he landed, and was put on board our ship, while I was as wicked as I could be : and I used to think he and others of them

were nothing better than a set of mopish half-witted fools.

*Far.* Ah my dear child ! if the Lord had not brought us into our sober senses, by his grace on our hearts, we should have continued fools of a much *wickeder* sort. But I find you are going to tell the same story you told me and my dame the night before last. It is a mighty moving one, do let the 'Squire hear the rest of it.

*Hen.* After it had pleased God to break down my vile heart, this sailor and I used frequently to talk these matters over together, and he told me the following story :

“ While on the coasts of Africa, two young slaves were brought on board, after there had been a bloody sham fight ; one of them a fine young man about seventeen, the other about seven, screaming and crying enough to break his heart. On the day afterwards the Father, now grown venerable with age, distracted with grief under such a painful bereavement ; sent a message to the captain of the slave ship, and being one of consequence among their tribes, promised that he would search the country for every thing that was esteemed valuable in their way, provided it might be accepted for their redemption. The captain immediately acquiesced, and assured him that he should not be against dealing with him, provided what he produced was of proper value. Two days afterwards the old man brought a large cargo of gold ore, ivory, die woods, and other commodities, all of which the captain seemed to look upon with considerable delight ; and after he had ordered the whole of them to be taken down under the deck, the old man weeping and trembling under the most painful suspense, he swore at him for an old fool, and declared if he did not take himself off directly, as they were just going to set sail, he should order him to be thrown overboard. The poor creature stood motion'ess for a while, dropt down upon his knees as though they had been iron,

uttered some words with great indignation, which were not understood, and were probably some expressions of imprecation, ran instantly to the stern of the ship, cast himself into the sea and was seen no more !!!

*Wor.* What treachery! what cruelty! what horrid monsters are these slave traders in human shape. Though nothing can vindicate the crime of suicide; yet the fate of this poor man is enough to cut one to the heart, for it seems that his affection to his offspring was so strong, that he would rather lose his own life than live without his children. But pray Mr. Henry, what is your opinion of the general disposition of an African?

*Hen.* As far as I could discover, when they are ill used, they become dark, sulky, and resentful to a high degree; but if treated affectionately, and with friendship, they are in return, the most affectionate and kind: a proof of this you have in a variety of instances. Where a planter uses them with lenity, as a family of his fellow creatures, though still his slaves, they would fight and die for him. I heard of an instance of a worthy gentleman, who bought a young slave for his travelling servant, designing when he came of age to give him his liberty. And when he told him he was no longer his slave, and that he was at liberty to leave him as soon as he pleased; he cried out, with many tears, "Me leave you, my dear massey, me no leave you, no never! me no want better wages dan to serve my dear massey; if you turn me out of one door, me come in at de oder; me never leave my dear massey; no never, never"!!!

*Wor.* What extreme cruelty, to injure and enslave a race of our fellow creatures, whose minds are capable of such noble and generous sensations. O! it is too much to be thought of. [To Henry.] Indeed Mr. Henry, I think you must discontinue your stories, for Mrs. Worthy seems more affected than myself, and my poor daughter is more overcome than either of us; and as to Mr. Lovegood, you see how much he feels on the subject, though as yet you have given us nothing of the history of poor Sancho, which you say



is as affecting as any of the former. I think for the present we have heard as much as we can bear, and that the rest of it must be deferred till another opportunity.

*Hen.* It is not only very affecting, but equally as improving; for he told me a lovely story of his conversion to the knowledge and grace of the gospel, by the Moravian Missionaries.

*Mrs. Wor.* What can be the excuse for such disgraceful and abominable cruelties against our fellow creatures?

*Hen.* Why madam, we have been frequently told by some that they are scarcely to be esteemed as our fellow creatures, but a species of beings considerably below us.

*Wor.* [fired with holy indignation.] Is it possible to admit such a thought for a moment? Can they be worse brutes naturally than ourselves? What a dishonor in us to carry on such an abominable traffic, and for others to attempt to vindicate, or even to palliate it, when every principle belonging to it is founded upon *incurable injustice*! For it appears to me, admitting their argument for the moment, if it can be proved that their natural understandings are in a small degree inferior to our own; are we from thence to infer, that we have a right to set them at variance among themselves, that we may kidnap, rob, and murder, as we like best? And are we to set the example to all Europe, by being the first and principal transgressors, that we may avail ourselves annually of more than twenty thousand slaves for the sake of our luxuries; and destroy or enslave at least double that number of our fellow creatures; considering the multitudes we are obliged to murder by sham wars, in order that we may procure them, and consequently draw down by our infamous example the same evil on as many more besides? Will reason or conscience for a moment submit to it, when the only pretext which can be given is, that we suppose their understandings are inferior to ours? If so, why not pity and protect

them till better instructed? But *cowards* alone take the advantage of *fools*, supposing the poor Africans to be such. What then shall we call ourselves, *Christians*, or *devils*? and can a race of *devils* act worse against us than we do against them? And as they have exactly the same right, if they had equal power, to plunder us as we have plundered them; how should we bear it, if a fleet of their ships should hover round our shores, like a set of vultures after their prey? Would not every principle of self-interested indignation be roused in us? If then it be admitted that their understandings be weaker than ours, yet I am sure of this, that in art and wickedness, as it relates both to our principle and practice towards them, we abundantly exceed them.

*Far.* Well, I wish with all my heart our 'Squire was in the *thickest* of them, he would give it them *roundly*.

*Mrs. Lit.* Patty my child, ring the bell.

*Miss Polly.* No mother, Patty and Nancy are going out themselves to bring it in.

[Miss Patty and Miss Nancy went out immediately, and by way of keeping up an old hospitable custom, speedily returned, Miss Nancy with a plate heaped full of cake, cut in slices, and Miss Patty with a large waiter, with glasses of wine already poured out.]

*Mrs. Lit.* [To Mr. and Mrs. Worthy.] Madam, I hope you and the 'Squire will be so kind as to drink a glass of wine, and eat a bit of cake, after your tea.

*Mrs. Wor.* No I thank you Mrs. Littleworth, we seldom take any thing after tea till supper time.

*Far.* I hope your *honor* and *madam* will be free, and taste a little of the cake that my wife and daughters have been making, and drink a glass of wine. It is *outlandish* wine, the same as your honor drinks at the hall. My son went for it to Mr. Vintner's of the George.

*Wor.* Well Mr. Littleworth, for once I shall have no objection to taste your wine; and as my wife and daughter have been so much affected at the stories

Mr. Henry has been telling us, I hope they will follow my example.

[As the fashion of drinking healths was not yet banished from Grace-hill farm, Mr. Worthy drank the family of the Littleworths, then sipped his glass again, and drank His Majesty's good health. On which the farmer observed, in his younger days how his father directed him to drink the Pretender's good health; but that now he could drink His Majesty's good health with all his heart. The same glass served to drink success to farming, and the last sip served for another toast---A speedy abolition of the Slave Trade.\* Mr. Worthy was the toast-master, in which Mr. Lovegood heartily joined him, and thus ended the ceremony of the cake and wine.]

*Loveg.* Well, but Mr. Henry, as it is agreed that all your stories will be too much for us at the present, and as we must hear about poor Sancho and his brethren; may I request the favor that the next time this company meets it may be at the vicarage, some Wednesday before the lecture. [to Mr. Worthy] But I am afraid Sir, we shall not have that pleasure for above a fortnight or three weeks, as I hear you are going to take Mrs. Worthy to see her relations in Lancashire.

*Wor.* Directly as we return, I am sure we shall be all very happy to come and see you, when we hope, not only for some profitable conversation about poor Sancho, but a good sermon into the bargain. But shall we not interrupt you Sir, in your meditations on that evening.

*Loveg.* O no Sir! I hope I shall be prepared to talk to the poor people who attend our lecture before you come. Besides, such sort of conversation

\* Since then, God be praised, this infernal trade is now no more! The evil has healed itself, for the continued cultivation of new lands in the West-Indies, would have been the ruin of the old plantations: as self-interest continued the business, so self-interest has put an end to it.

as we shall then have, I am sure will be no impediment to the sermon; and by such a kind visit, you will confer a favor on Mrs. Lovegood, who from her attention to her family concerns, is so much confined at home.

*Wor.* [To Mr. Lovegood] Having now settled these matters, we can allow you a sufficient scope of time for the Bible, a little singing and prayer.

*Far.* Aye, and what a mercy it is when God sends ministers that know how to pray. I well remember, when I was first awakened to a sense of my evil state, *as how*, when our Rector Mr. Dolittle, came as he thought, to set me right again; when I asked him if he would take the Bible and expound a chapter and go to prayer; poor gentleman, how he jumped about *like a parched pea in a frying pan*. What a pity it is when the *neglectful* and blind, are sent by blind men to lead the blind.

[Miss Nancy directly took the hint---ran out immediately and brought in her father's large Bible out of the kitchen, placed it before Mr. Lovegood, and snuffed the candles.]

*Far.* Why Nancy my dear, you should not have brought in *that* Bible. [To Mr. Lovegood] Why Sir, I should be quite ashamed if you were to see what marks and notes I have made in it while I sat reading in the kitchen by the fire side.

*Loveg.* Never mind that my friend. I always love to see a marked Bible; it is in my opinion a good evidence that our Bibles do us good, if we can mark and note them while we read them: you know that we pray that we may "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the blessed word of life.

*Far.* Amen, I pray God we may. But with your leave Sir, I had rather you would read out of another. [To his wife.] Dame, will you send for that nice *fine* Bible with the pictures in it, which your aunt left you as a legacy. It never can be made a better use of than on the present occasion.

[The fine best Bible was accordingly fetched down

out of the curious old chest, or cabinet, in which it was imprisoned, while Mr. Lovegood said, that he wished it might be as much marked and noted as the other was; observing at the same time, that it was from the kitchen Bible the people got the most good, because in general in most use. Mr. Lovegood however, having been much affected, begged leave first to walk out for a few minutes into the garden, on which occasion, being a man of a very fruitful and retentive mind, he composed a hymn, which was afterwards sung at the family service. And now Mr. Lovegood, "like a workman that needeth not be ashamed," opened the precious word of life. The chapter he chose was the 12th of the Romans. He dropped some very pertinent observations while he read the chapter, but his attention seemed peculiarly arrested by the following words: "Let love be without dissimulation; abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good; be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another." Then he quoted from St. John "God is love;" and dropped some very wise and rich remarks, how God, our God in Christ, being love, needed no other happiness than what he possessed in his own infinitely lovely existence; and that we were proportionably happy in the enjoyment of our existence also, as we existed in him. He observed that the highest indulgence to a gracious mind was, to confer that happiness on others, in loving them and doing them good; as through the pardoning love of Christ such infinite good had been done to us by our regeneration and conversion to him. That self-love was the natural principle on which all mankind acted in their fallen state; that the grace of the Holy Spirit was communicated to crucify and mortify this *hellish* principle in man, and to implant in him another principle perfectly supernatural, a most solemn and sacred love to God for his own sake, and a most merciful and tender love to man for God's sake. He strongly remarked how contrary, a spirit of tyranny and op-



pression was to the spirit of Christianity; that sin turned *men* into *monsters*, rendered them "implacable, unmerciful, and without natural affection;" that the grace of the gospel on the contrary, turns *monsters* into *men*; not only directing them to be loving, gentle, and merciful among themselves, "in distributing to the necessities of the saints, and in being given to hospitality;" but constraining them to go beyond all this, even "to bless our very persecutors, while we could recompense to no man evil for evil; but if possible, as much as in us lay, to live peaceably with all men;" therefore the Christian, instead of avenging himself, chose rather "to give place unto wrath." If therefore, even "his very enemy hungered, he would feed him, if he thirsted he would give him drink;" thus instead of being overcome of evil, he was directed, like his Lord and Master, "to overcome evil with good." Thus he went on with the chapter, impressing the same tempers and graces on the family, as were then before them in the Bible. He then observed how the reverse of all this was exemplified in the horrid business of the slave trade; that the whole of its establishment, was founded on the "mammon of unrighteousness," on a selfish love of the world; and that the result of this *infernal* traffic, could not be otherwise than what it really was, a regular system of wholesale licensed thievery and murder; that instead of supposing the principles of Christianity could for a moment allow such a *hellish* commerce in human blood, directly as we are made by the *power* of the gospel what we should be by the *letter* of the law, we are blessed with the spirit of universal love. We are meek, merciful, loving, "pure in heart,"--- "blameless and harmless, the sons of God." The furious lion is softened into the lamb, and all that is venomous and evil, as in the serpent kind, is powerfully extracted from our natures by "the blood of the everlasting covenant," whereby we "draw near to God," and are constrained to live to his glory.

Next he dropped some delicate hints on the bless

edness of this religion; as it brought down such happiness into families, by making them experience a little heaven in themselves and their houses. The Farmer, Henry, and Miss Nancy, felt the application, for they could "set to their seal that God was true," in the glorious influences of the power of converting grace upon their own hearts.

After the chapter had been thus read and expounded, the following hymn, just before composed by Mr. Lovegood, was given out, and Thomas Newman *pitched* the tune:

Now let the efforts of our praise  
Arise to him who reigns above;  
In whose essential holiness  
Dwells the eternal flame of love.

Jesus, our God, that love we sing,  
Unknown to sinners of our race,  
Till thy compassion brought thee down,  
'To save us by thy wond'rous grace.

Then what is heav'n but as we find  
In thee is all we wish to be;  
And what is hell in man, dear Lord,  
But as he is devoid of thee?

Where then is heav'n but in the soul,  
Who dwells in thee supremely bless'd;  
And where is hell but on the shore  
Where mercy finds no peaceful rest.

Soon may this love and mercy reach  
The swarthy tribes of Afric's shore;  
Those slaves of sin thou canst set free,  
And bid them go and sin no more.

We blush with holy shame that men,  
Who bear thy sacred name, our God,  
Should dare one single man t'enslave,  
Or shed one drop of human blood.

Kindle the flame of love divine,  
In some kind heralds of thy grace;  
And bid each distant clime receive  
The gladsome news of heavenly peace!

After the hymn, Mr. Lovegood offered up a very appropriate prayer; first for themselves and the family; blessing God for the grace already given, and praying for further vouchsafements where still needed for the rest of the company then present; for the people of his ministerial charge; for the further spread of the gospel; for the King and government; and for those objects of human woe, who had been made the subject of their conversation.---Soon after this the company withdrew; and if the reader be not tired in reading, he must exercise his patience in waiting the return of Mrs. Worthy from Lancashire, before the subject of the slave trade be resumed in another dialogue, and then concluded. In the interval, however, the reader will find in the two next Dialogues a more minute account of the family of the Littleworths, than was at first designed.

## DIALOGUE XIII.

THE HISTORY OF THE FAMILY OF THE LITTLEWORTHS,  
WITH THE CHARACTER OF RECTOR FILLPOT, AND  
MR. MEEK, HIS WELSH CURATE.

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**T**HERE lived in the town of Ruckford, about fifteen miles from Mapleton, a Mr. Nathanael Steadyman, who had united himself to Farmer Littleworth's family by marrying his younger sister. His occupation was that of a Currier, in which line he did a considerable deal of business, and was in general esteem among his neighbours, for his candor and integrity.

The family of the Littleworths however, were unfortunately educated. In point of religion they were tutored in all the high church notions of the day; so that the least deviation from the established church, was in their esteem, more to be dreaded than a thousand deviations from the common rules of morality; insomuch, that even cursing and swearing was a much smaller offence than attending a *conventicle*, and scarcely any offence at all, provided people exercised their profane talents against the Dissenters. Report also says, that old Mr. Simon Littleworth, with all his family, used to drink the Pretender's health after dinner, and that it was well he did not lose his life in the rebellion in the year 1745, for entertaining and encouraging the rebel army when in the North, against the present family upon the throne, by whom our civil and religious liberties were esta-

lished. Mr. Simon Littleworth, the father of the present Farmer Littleworth, loved getting money to his heart, but could not bear to spend it, even on a decent education for his children. He died about the year 1776, leaving a fortune among his children of about three hundred and fifty pounds each; entailing also upon them, all the prejudices of an unhappy day and generation; conceiving higher notions of the religion of Dr. Sacheverell\* than that of Jesus Christ and his Apostles.

According therefore to all probable circumstances, Farmer Littleworth would never have submitted to have heard the gospel, if he had not first heard it in a church. But the farmer, though still a churchman, was now happily delivered from the trammels of his former education, and began to entertain equal love to Christians of all denominations: yet not so the rest of the family, which now consisted only of himself, and two sisters; his eldest brother and a sister having been dead some years.

His elder sister Polly, was the exact counterpart of Miss Polly, to whom she stood god-mother. She was in her younger days, so self-willed and perverse, that no person could ever venture to ask her the question, if she chose to alter her state; which also, by general report, will probably be the fate of the god-daughter, as well as the aunt.

The farmer's sister continued to live in the neighbourhood of Mapleton, till she was near sixty; but on account of the pressure of the times, she has lately removed further north, to make a joint purse with another old maiden lady, known by the name of Madam Vixen. And though she was Miss Polly, all the time she continued near her brother, yet since

\* Dr. Sacheverell was the high church champion in the days of Queen Anne. He was impeached by the commons for his seditious high church principles; his sermon was ordered to be burnt by the common hangman, while he himself was suspended from his ministry for three years.



her removal she has submitted, though with some regret, to the graver appellation of Mrs. Mary.

Thus convenience has brought those two old ladies together; though they are the frequent cause of vexation to each other; yet hereby they are just able to keep a maid servant between them, who is generally changed about six times in the year; all the attention they are possessed of, being divided between a lap-dog, and two cats. Besides this, Madam Vixen had formerly another pet, viz. a parrot, which for a while was in high favor, but alas, her mistress was also obliged to part with her on the following droll account. It is well known how these talkative creatures can imitate sounds, if they frequently hear them. She could not only bark like the dog, mew like the cat, but call herself pretty pretty Poll all the day long; and while she went no further, she continued to be Madam Vixen's Pretty Poll also. But besides this, Poll being in the constant habit of hearing the voice of scolding, she caught so very correctly the same angry irritable tone of voice adopted by her mistress, that it was scarcely possible to tell whether was the scold, the parrot, or the old lady. This not only engaged the attention of the people while they passed by, especially if she was hung out at the window, but whenever any of the neighbours came on a visit, and particularly females, Poll would be sure to meet them with the cry of "nasty slut;" and next set up a screaming call after the servant, and scold away with all her might, exciting the laughter of every visitor, while in vain Madam Vixen would cry "hold your tongue, Poll;" for Poll would be sure to cry "hold your tongue" again. It might not be amiss, if such an excellent mimic were hung up in every house, where such vixens are found to exist.

Madam Vixen is often accustomed to boast that she had a superior education; and therefore attempts to correct Mrs. Mary for her vulgarity of expression; and also that her family was of much *better blood*

than the family of the Littleworths. This is a frequent cause of mortification to Mrs. Mary, who plies her in return, for her family pride and self-conceit. Thus alternately they irritate and vex each other, till they make themselves so peevish and fretful thereby, that they scarcely exchange a word for several days together. During these intervals of ill humor, there are frequent threats of separation, till these little *fracas* are settled by the neighbouring gossips bringing them some new tales of the affairs of the neighbourhood, which they delight to hear, retail, and exaggerate. Then an *innocent* game at cards sets them a quarrelling again, and makes them *guilty* of the same sort of conduct against each other. Thus they *rub on* together from time to time: yet if their dispositions are dissimilar in some instances, in others they are perfectly alike.

In point of religion, they are precisely agreed; for though they seldom trouble the church but when the weather is very fine, yet they *do their duty* in reading the Psalms and Lessons at home: while two or three times a year they submit to the penance of a gloomy week of preparation before they receive the holy sacrament; which is seldom done unless on the great festivals. But in nothing are they more similar than in their belief of various signs, and omens, and prognostications; on which they are ever exercising their minds, and tormenting each other, under the expectation of the most gloomy events. The prognostications of Moore's almanack are always received, and read by them, with prodigious avidity and glee; and though they are aware that the first Francis Moore, the original physician and *astrologer*, must have been dead long ago; yet they have no doubt but the present Francis Moore is as much a real character, and a far wiser *astrologer* than his father; he being also the seventh son of his father, who was himself a seventh son. How far it was done with a design to impose on the credulity of the old ladies, might be difficult to say; yet they seem fully persuaded that

the present Francis Moore, has also a seventh son, who though but young, is now studying both physic and *astrology* in the north of Ireland; and they have no doubt but that he is born to possess so supreme a degree of knowledge, by investigating the configurations of the stars, that he will be able to read the history of all future events beforehand, both private and public; as plainly as he can now read his A, B, C; and that he will as far outshine those *great luminaries*, Count Swedenburgh, Mr. Brothers, and some others, prophesiers on our late public events, as the vast knowledge of a Newton outshines the intellectual powers of a goose.\*

Mrs. Mary it seems, some years ago, in one of her over credulous fits, wishing for some foresight as it respected herself, sent a guinea to the astrologer that he might cast her nativity; and the prognostication was, that she was to be married to a surgeon. Through this unfortunate circumstance, she set her cap at every surgeon and apothecary for miles round the neighbourhood. She once went so far as to feign herself sick, that she might have an excuse to send for one of the gentlemen of the faculty: and though she gave him to understand how matters had been predicted respecting her future life; yet alas! such was the Doctor's incredulity, that notwithstanding the prognostication, he could not believe that he was to be the man.

No one can wonder that these ladies, who are so fond of hearing and telling "Old wives fables," and of attending to such absurdities, should also give

\* In some former editions I exposed the absurdity of the prognostications of these artful *astrologers* on the public credulity, in pretending to prophecy about war and peace, directly contrary to matters of fact; and only for this reason, that I might warn the plainer sort of my unthinking readers, not to be the purchasers of an almanack which has in it somewhat very profane, by which multitudes are misguided by the most silly principles to look into future events, when they have a more sure word of prophecy to which they do well to resort.





**WEAK MINDS,  
SCARED BY SUPERSTITIOUS OMENS.**

Hence it is that they are kept in perpetual alarm, at one time by the death-watch, at another time by the croaking of a raven, or the screeching of an owl; then again by the winding-sheet in the candle, and a variety of such other absurdities: as though the all-wise God had given a commission to spiders, owls, and ravens, and even to tallow candles, to instruct mankind in the knowledge of different future events.



way to all sorts of fears and apprehensions, arising from other causes, the most superstitious and absurd. Hence it is that they are kept in perpetual alarm; at one time by the death-watch; at another time by the croaking of a raven, or the screeching of an owl; then again by the winding sheet in the candle, and a variety of such other absurdities: as though the all-wise God, had given a commission to spiders,\* owls, ravens, and even to tallow candles, to instruct mankind in the knowledge of different future events.

This unfortunate turn of mind, had however once proved nearly fatal, not only to the comfort, but the very life of Madam Vixen. She heard three or four times, her chamber-bell ring, as it was supposed, of its own accord. This brought to her recollection the story of her grandmother's death, which was foretold by some such event three weeks before the time. She therefore positively concluded that within that period she was to depart. This so worked upon her imagination as to bring on a serious illness. The apothecary was sent for only out of form, as she concluded it could be of no avail; the lawyer was called in to alter and finish her will; and the poor clergyman, though as ill liked as others of his brethren, was desired to attend to prepare her for her change, and fit her for the final reception of the holy sacrament; which it was her design to have received a day or two before

\* Some naturalists are of opinion that the death-watch is not the spider, but another much smaller insect, found in the wood of old houses.

Then tell all your grannies it is a wood worm,  
That lies in old wood like a hare in her form;  
With teeth or with claws, it will bite or will scratch,  
And chamber-maids christen this worm a death-watch;  
Because, like a watch, it always cries click,  
Then woe be to those in the house who are sick;  
For sure as a gun they will give up the ghost,  
If the maggot cries click, when it scratches the post;  
As soon as they hear it, it shorten's their breath,  
And they speedily die—because frighten'd to death.

her departure, which seemed for a while more fully confirmed by another event *dreadfully* similiar to the former. Madam Vixen and her nurse, one night, evidently heard a bell ring, as though it had been from under the ground; but the fears excited on this account were soon dispersed, as it was only a piece of Mrs. Mary's prudent attention, who muffled the hammer of the bell belonging to the clock, as its shrill sounding noise was found offensive to Mrs. Vixen: and a little while after this, the whole of this supposed melancholy event disclosed itself; for one night; while the nurse was sitting up, hearkening after death watches, screech owls, &c. and feeding upon these strange fears, the kitten stole into the room, (for both the old ladies are very fond of cats,) and after the manner of that frisky generation, Puss fixed her eyes upon her old plaything, the tassel of the bell, and consequently gave it a handsome ring. Mrs. Vixen takes the alarm, and asks if the bell did not again ring of itself? The nurse burst out with laughing, and adds,---“ Why Madam, it is nothing but the cat playing with the bell-tassel, and I dare say this was the reason why it rang before.” However, the ringing of the bell brought Mrs. Mary into the room, when she heard of the event, joined with the nurse in a laugh on the occasion; while Mrs. Vixen immediately took heart, and consequently began directly to recover. The nurse told the apothecary on his next day's visit, that the cat had done more for her mistress's recovery by ringing the bell, than he could do with all the drugs in his shop. She then told him the whole of the story, which before was known only to the family. A message also was soon afterwards sent to the minister, that he might be informed a repetition of his visits would not be needed; and the lady herself soon recovered, on the removal of the causes of her disease.

The reader may suppose that he would not have been presented with a detail of these little events, had it not been with a design to expose the folly of

those superstitious fears which are so very injurious to the minds and even the constitutions of all who have not sufficient sense and resolution to resist them. Where there is but little real religion, the want of it is too frequently supplied by an abundance of superstition. The human mind is prone to run into extremes on every occasion: some are for believing too much, others for believing too little. Happy are they, who being blessed with "that wisdom which is from above;" are preserved in the middle path, and saved from every extreme.

But to return from this digression. Mrs. Steadyman was in some respects of a better mind than her sister: she was of a more conversable and friendly disposition, which she could exercise pretty freely among her neighbours, though but very sparingly to her husband; who originally being but a poor, though very industrious apprentice, found it a *convenient match*. Thus by marrying a *fortune*, he had the *misfortune* to be married to one, who conceived she had a right to "dictate and usurp authority over her husband,\*" or according to the delicate style of the day, *to wear the small clothes*. This in point of civility, was to be submitted to, at least during the honey-moon; but to the sad discomfiture of Mr. Steadyman, she has contrived to wear them from that time to this.

Notwithstanding some little offence had been given to Mr. Steadyman's family, by the Farmer having shown a dislike, (they being on a visit soon after he became serious,) to the introduction of cards and such sort of *innocent amusements*†, they felt themselves under the obligation, from their family

\* Such should have been the correct translation of Timothy, ch. vi. and if any good women of the same temper with Mrs. Steadyman should doubt the justice of my criticism, I readily refer them to others who understand Greek better than myself.

† See Dialogue the IVth.

connexion, to repeat their visit upon the unexpected return of Henry their nephew, and it was about ten days after Mr. Worthy's visit to the farmer, that this interview took place.

They arrived on the Saturday evening; as Mr. Steadyman could be best spared from his business on the Sunday. The author is not acquainted with the conversation, as it passed at supper; but what afterwards took place when the table was cleared, he has collected to the best of his power.

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[*Thomas Newman is introduced.*]

*Thomas.* Master, you were saying you would like to take the covered cart to Brookfield church to-morrow, as the weather threatens to be wet; if so, I should be glad to get things ready before I go home.

*Farmer.* I cannot tell as yet *Thomas*. [To *Mrs. Steadyman*.] Sister, would you like to go with us to Brookfield church? It is hardly two miles from our house, and Mr. Lovegood is a charming man.

*Mrs. Steadyman.* O no brother, I did not come here to change my religion; wherever I go, I always think it best to keep to the parish church. I shall go with sister Littleworth to Mapleton, to hear Mr. Dolittle.

*Mr. Steadyman.* Well brother Littleworth, I'll go with you, for I cannot see that your notions of religion have done you any harm; and I must confess my nephew Henry is wonderfully reformed; but you need not have the cart for me---I had rather walk.

*Miss Polly.* If my aunt Steadyman won't go, I am sure Patty and I sha'nt. I have no notion to go and be crowded, and pushed about at that church, when we can sit so comfortably at our own.

*Miss Patty.* And I shall go with sister Polly, for there are no people of fashion go to Brookfield church, excepting 'Squire Worthy, and I wonder that he should so soon turn about to this *new* religion. None of the *quality* in our town are of the same way of thinking.

*Miss Nancy.* I don't see father, that you need to have the cart, if my aunt won't go; you and brother Harry may ride as usual, and I can walk with my uncle, and shew him the nearest way over the fields.

*Hen.* Well I wish with all my heart my aunt would but for once come with my uncle; who knows what a blessing may attend it!

*Mrs. Steadym.* There,---That was the way of talk last time we were here, as though nobody had any religion, unless they were all of *one way of thinking*.

*Far.* Well then Thomas, we won't have the cart unless it should rain. Harry and I shall ride as usual, and Nancy and brother will walk. But have you had your supper?

*Tho.* Yes master, my mistress has been in the pantry, and cut me off a great plate heaped full of victuals to take home with me. It will make a rare feast for Betty and the children, with a few boiled potatoes. [To his Mistress.] Thank you madam a thousand times. [Thomas retires.]

*Mrs. Lit.* [to Mr. Steadyman.] I am not so much against my husband's religion as I was, for it has made that poor man an excellent-servant; and Henry and Nancy are good children: and though I don't like to leave the parish church, yet I believe Mr. Lovegood is a very good man.

*Mr. Steadym.* Well, and about six miles from our town there is a Mr. Meek, who serves two churches, who is of the same *way of thinking*; and I have often heard him run down; but for what, I cannot tell, unless it be because he is a better Minister than most of his neighbours.



*Mrs. Steadym.* Why don't you know that his Rector threatened to turn him out of his curacies the other day, because so many people come out of other Parishes to hear him, and that he went to the Bishop about him?

*Mr. Steadym.* Well, and much good he got by that. How could any one think that the Bishop would turn a poor man out of his curacies for having a full Church. I am sure, if the Bishop was to turn off all the *Parsons* that have empty Churches, he would have enough to do.

*Far.* Aye; but Brother, you have only got hold of half the story: for it has been said when Rector Fillpot, who is some great Cathedral man, (and every one knows he loves his bottle better than his Bible,) went to the Bishop to make it out as though his curate did wrong to have such a full Church, he directly said he was heartily glad of it, and wished that every other Parson's Church was as full. And when Rector Fillpot asked my Lord Bishop what must be done, if all the people left their Churches to go after these sort of preachers? he said *as how* they must out-live and out-preach such men as Mr. Meek, and that was the way to bring them back again. Rector Fillpot must have found it a *desperate* hard thing to *quilt* all that; but to my way of thinking, this was all a *shim sham job of it*; for the Rector knows he never could have got such another Curate in his own way, to serve two Churches, at the distance of between three and four miles from each other; and throughout all the summer months, to serve each of these Churches twice a day, for fifty pounds a year. Now you know brother, I am a farmer, and Mr. Meek must have a horse: for he cannot ride through the air like a *witch on a broomstick*, and that would cost him, to buy it and keep it, near upon twenty pounds out of the fifty.

*Mr. Steadym.* Poor gentleman! I have often wondered how he could contrive to live upon so little; and he generally looks more decent in his clothing

than one would expect; but he is much beloved, and I am told that many of his neighbours help him out.

*Far.* Aye, and so they need; and I am told also that our 'Squire gave him a new suit of clothes from *top to toe*, last Christmas; and that he looked as well dressed on a Sunday as the Rector himself, though he never could look so *plump*. According to his way of living, I wonder how he does with his small income, *to keep body and soul together*; but it is a *burning shame* that other people should keep Rector Fillpot's curate for him, or to let him be half starved, poor gentleman!

*Mrs. Steadym.* I dare say the Rector would give him more if he was of his *own way of thinking*; but he is displeased with him on account of his religion.

*Far.* Ah Sister, this is a *sorry* excuse. You make but a poor hand of it, in *lifting the lame dog over the style*; but to my mind, that man has found out the best way of *thinking*, who has found out the best way of *living*. Well well, when we were all honored to drink tea at our 'Squire's the other day, my son Harry gave a terrible account of the slave trade; but sure I am, the slave trade in England is not ended, when such a man as Rector Fillpot can have so many places of preferment, as to bring him in twelve hundred pounds a year, while his poor curate, that he had quite out of Wales, (for that he might come cheap,) should be worked so hard, and have not much more to feed himself than what he wants to feed his horse, which he must have to take him from Church to Church. And poor Mr. Meek now begins to be an old man. I am afraid these fat Rectors don't love their Curates half so well as I do my old horses.

*Mr. Steadym.* Indeed brother, it is a sad thing to see those who are our teachers acting in such a manner. We always mind more what *a man does*, than

what *a man says*; and as to Rector Fillpot we never hear of his coming into our parts but about Easter; and then every body trembles lest he should come to screw up his tythes still higher than he has done already; and all that he does for it, is perhaps to preach one sermon in each of his churches, and then they are sure to see no more of him till that time twelve months. But it seems they talk about making all these Rector's reside at their own livings; yet I can't see what good can come of that; for till they send us better men, the more we know of these sort of Ministers, the less we shall like them.

*Far.* Yes; and when he comes into these parts, he always visits our Rector, and gives us a sermon. How I used to admire him in the days of my ignorance. The last time he preached, it seems he made *a main bustle* about the Church, and fell *aboard* some Parsons, (I'll warrant he was throwing some *scalers* at Mr. Lovegood,) who wanted to make themselves popular by being neglectful about their tythes; and that it was the duty of the Clergy to see after the *molements*\* of the Church, (I think he called them,) and that it was the duty of the people to pay the Parsons what they called their dues. Well well; if such a sort of religion will take a man to heaven, I am sure Rector Fillpot will sit far above St. Paul; for every body knows, if he is neglectful of his *flock*, he is eager enough after the *fleece*; and they say, he has got so fat of late, that he can scarcely squeeze himself into the pulpit, while his poor Curate is so thin, that he could almost creep into a mouse hole.

*Mrs. Lit.* Aye master, I remember what you say is very true. I was there to hear him, and I thought he had better been upon something else.

*Far.* Why, if such men as Rector Fillpot are to go to heaven, it is impossible to suppose that Demas,

\* The farmer meant Emoluments.

who "loved this present evil world," should ever have been sent to hell. Why they think we *countrified* plain folk are so ignorant, as that we don't know a good man from a bad one. But dame, can you remember what was the text?

*Mrs. Lit.* I remember it was a very short one; "The laborer is worthy of his hire."

*Far.* Why then, according to that doctrine, the Curate, who did all the labor, should have all that the Rector gets, and the Rector all the Curate gets; and I'll warrant this would soon bring down his fat belly for him.

*Hen.* Well well, I must confess nothing hardened me in my wickedness like the conduct of such ministers. When I was going on in the most vile ways, and with the most wicked company; we could laugh at all religion, because it was preached by such sort of Ministers as we knew had no more of it than ourselves.

*Mr. Steadym.* Indeed Henry, I am as much ashamed of such men as you can be. If I had known Mr. Meek had been so good a man, I should have been glad now and then to help him out.

*Mrs. Steadym.* I sha'n't like that Nathaniel, without your letting me know it. I am afraid you'll soon be of brother's religion, and I sha'n't like that neither. I have no notion of chopping and changing about one's religion in this manner. You know that when our Minister, Mr. Dulman, thought you seemed that way inclined, and when he heard you were coming to see Brother, he came on purpose to advise you against all these new notions; for if we are all wrong now, what is become of your fathers and grandfathers, who went on in the same way as ourselves? But I don't see what business we have to find fault with the Clergy; they are our spiritual guides; and I am sure we can't do better than to trust in them for the *salvation* of our souls.

*Far.* Well, well sister, I shall never think of trusting the concerns of my precious soul to such men, as take no care of their own; whatever their religion may be. Why Sister, you put me in mind of the *nonsensical* talk of old Betty Turner, who has changed her religion ever since 'Squire Massman has allowed her eighteen-pence a week: and the Priest came the other day and took away her bible from her, because he said it was the *heretics bible*; and gave her a book of their sort of prayers and devotions in the room of it; and such a book *for sure* I never saw before: for she lent it to me, that it might bring me over. What strange stories about purgatory! and nobody knows where it is; what foolish *crossings* and *thwartings* with their holy water, to fray away the devil: and then to my mind their prayers are *quite blasphemy*; for they have twenty times more prayers to the Virgin Mary and St. Peter, and to a great many more Saints, whose names I never heard of before in all my *born days*, than to Jesus Christ, and they seem to make much more of their own merits than of his; and yet they say, the Priest has no objection now and then to get *tipsey* when he visits the 'Squire, especially on a fast day; but she says she is now determined to *pin her faith on his sleeve*.

*Mr. Steadym.* Why now I don't think it can be said, that any one is speaking against all the butchers that come to our market, for many of them are decent good sort of people, because he says that Roger Slaughter is such a blackguardly fellow, that nobody loves to keep a stall next to his; so I cannot think how it can be said that any one is speaking against the Clergy, because he speaks of the bad lives among them who should tell us what Christians should be, by living like Christians themselves.

*Mrs. Steadym.* Aye, aye, there is no doubt but what Nathaniel will agree with you on that doctrine, fast enough.



*Far.* Why now I can declare Sister, that no man living for twenty miles round can love and honor those of the Clergy, whose lives properly *square* with their doctrines, more than I do; but while we hear both in the Old Testament and the New, how the Lord declared his wrath against all the false prophets, and scribes, and pharisees, though we should pity and pray for them, yet I am sure we do wrong to be their followers. You know if the blind lead the blind, we shall all fall into the ditch together. But Brother, would you not like to have another glass of ale; [To his wife.] Dame, pour out sister another glass of currant wine, before we put away the things, and then fetch the Bible, and let us go to prayer; it is best not to sit too long by the *drink*.

*Mrs. Steadym.* But brother, may'nt we go up stairs and pray *to ourselves*, if we like that best?

*Mr. Steadym.* It is not so late but that we can stop a little while longer. [Mrs. Steadym submits.] The *marked Bible* is placed before the Farmer, who read the first part of our Lord's sermon upon the mount, Matthew v. and then said what good minds feel, and what they are naturally inclined to say, of the blessed state of those real Christians, our Lord describes as being thus blessed in him. And as it was the custom of the family, that when Henry read the Farmer prayed, and when the Farmer read Henry prayed, so Henry offered up a very suitable and affecting prayer. This so immediately attracted Mrs. Steadym's notice, that she was not a little surprised how well he could remember to *say his prayers* without book, and begged to know where the book was to be bought, out of which he had learnt his prayers. The Farmer made answer, that the prayers were written upon his son's heart, by the pen of Doctor Experience. The family wished to retire, which prevented all further enquiries about Doctor Experience, though the common guest of

every humble praying sinner's heart. The writer only, at a late hour in the evening, begins to find his own mind flag, and therefore wishes to conclude the present dialogue, that he may undertake another upon a more profitable and interesting subject, which took place on the Sunday evening, after the family's return from Brookfield church.

## DIALOGUE XIV.

BETWEEN THE FAMILY OF THE LITTLEWORTHS,  
AND MR. AND MRS. STEADYMAN.

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A SUNDAY EVENING'S CONVERSATION UPON THE MERCIES  
OF GOD, IN THE JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION  
OF THE UNGODLY.

**T**HE Farmer, Henry, and Nancy, when they went to Brookfield Church, were sometimes in the habit of retiring to Thomas Newman's between the services, especially on the Sacrament Sundays, and taking some refreshment with them, the scraps of which, were always beneficial to the family of this most pleasant and engaging peasant; to whom the Farmer felt himself under the highest obligations of the most important kind, and therefore at all times aimed to give him the utmost assistance in his power. The Farmer being desirous that Mr. Steadyman might see all the beautiful effects of real religion, to Thomas Newman's they retired between the services, and especially as Thomas's house was nearer the Church than the Golden Lion, whose worthy landlord had generally more customers than he could well receive.

After the return of the family they sat down to an early supper, and after that repast the following conversation took place:

*Mr. Steadym.* Well sister Littleworth, I never spent such a Sunday as this before. [To his wife.] Mistress, I wish you had been with us. I never saw

such a serious and devout congregation, and never heard two such sermons since I was born. And then we ate our dinners at Thomas Newman's house, the poor man that works for my brother. What a good man he is! and what a charming family he has got! I counted seven of them, and I think his wife is near her time again;\* and what a wonderful prayer he made before we all went to Church again. We do not serve God in our parts any thing like as they do here. I never saw any thing like religion as I have seen it this day.

*Mrs. Steadym.* Why Nathaniel, what can possess you to talk about religion in this manner? Well if I did not always suspect what would become of this visit, as well as Mr. Dulman.

*Mrs. Lit.* I let my husband go his way, and I go mine; and I find we are quite as happy since he has taken to religion as ever we were before.

*Mr. Steadym.* Well, never did I hear any Minister lay open the Bible, from the beginning to the end in a manner like him. I am sure I should never stay at home, if I could hear at Ruckford a Minister like Mr. Lovegood. If I can, I think I shall go to hear poor Mr. Meek the Welshman, for he is supposed to be the most like him of any man in our parts. But O how he explained, as he called it, the way of salvation for ruined sinners by Jesus Christ! Though

\* It is now upwards of three years since the Farmer became serious. This accounts for the addition of another child since that period (see Dialogue I.) and explains at the same time an odd report, how the Farmer was overheard, "talking to the Devil behind the hedge." The fact was, the Farmer hearing that Thomas's wife had produced another child, went to their house, and gave the family half a crown. On his return he was overheard grumbling and muttering against himself for his covetousness, declaring that the devil, his old master, should not have his ends. He therefore returned directly to Thomas's house, and said, "Thomas, this won't do, I must have my half crown again." Thomas, not a little surprised at this unexpected demand, restored the gift, and the farmer put a seven shilling piece in the room of it, and it was in this way the farmer conversed with the devil behind the hedge.

I have read so much of it in the Bible, and have heard so much about it; yet I wonder at myself, how I could be so ignorant what these things could mean.

*Hen.* Why to be sure he preached us two excellent sermons, but to me it appears as though every sermon he preached was better and better. O what a blessing we have in that most dear man of God! and what a mercy it would be, if in every Parish there were such Ministers to instruct the ignorant. It is his very heart's delight to go about doing good to the souls of his people.

*Mr. Steadym.* I must confess, when I heard him in the desk, I liked him wonderfully; but in the pulpit what a man he is! and with what love and affection he preaches! his heart seems to feel every word he says. But I rather wondered at his text, "By the law is the knowledge of sin." How wisely he explained it! I did not know there was such a text in all the Bible.

*Hen.* And did you not admire how he set forth the purity and holiness of God, both in his nature and in his law? That as he was infinitely holy in himself, so he must hate sin, whether committed by apostate men or angels, in an infinite degree; that we had not only to consider our outward actions before man, but the state of our hearts inwardly before God; that it was said, "Blessed are the pure in heart," for they and they only, "shall see God."

*Mr. Steadym.* Why, I had always understood that if we were but just and honest before man, it was quite enough. How well he explained that text, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified!" that though we might be justified by our actions in the sight of man, yet that none of us could be justified in the sight of God, as his holy nature abhorred the inward sinfulness of our hearts.

*Far.* Ah, dear brother, how glad I am to hear you



talk after this fashion ! Because I did not deserve to stand before the Justice for my wicked deeds, I thought I had righteousness enough to stand before the Lord himself. How could I suppose myself a Christian, while I thought no more about the salvation of my soul by Jesus Christ, than the dead *folk* do in our church-yard at Mapleton.

*Hen.* But while he pointed out the nature of God, did you not mind, uncle, how he explained to us that every wicked sinner in a state of enmity against God, lived with a hell in his own heart, while he was “living without God in the world ?”

*Mr. Steadym.* Yes. And I remember he said, that every sinner was his own tormentor by his wickedness.

*Hen.* I suppose you mean that part of his sermon, in which he was proving how every person who is tormented with anger, malice, or revenge, is a most cruel self-tormentor : and that covetousness shuts up a man’s heart, not only against all mankind, but against himself ; and that therefore he is a self-tormentor. These he said, are a set of *devilish* self-tormentors. Then he talked of a set of *beastly* self-tormentors ; and all that he said against these evil ways, I have experienced most sadly to be true, to my own cost. In those days I should not have cared if I had broken my father’s and mother’s heart, if I could but have got their property to have spent it in my wicked projects. Oh uncle Steadym ! I am ashamed to say what a sinner I have been ; and what a sinner I should have been, if the converting grace of the Gospel had not stopped me in the horrid career of sin. [*Henry is affected and weeps ; the Farmer is also much affected, and adds,*]

*Far.* See brother, how wonderfully the grace of God has changed the heart of my dear child ! how different he is now to what he was before he went to sea ! And you know what a poor, thoughtless, worldly-minded sinner I was before I took to go and hear Mr. Lovegood.

*Mr. Steadym.* Why I confess brother, I see some

thing in religion that I never thought of before, and all that I have been hearing to-day, seems to me, to be so true, that there is no disputing against it; though having heard so much of Mr. Lovegood's bad doctrine, I was determined to watch every word he said.

*Hen.* Yes uncle, and I was glad for your sake that you were there; for it appeared to me as clear as the light, what Mr. Lovegood said of the law, that it is the revelation of the mind and will of an infinitely holy God, among all his creatures; that therefore the least sin, in the least degree, must put us under the condemnation of that law; that if God could in any measure allow sin, or look over it upon account of our corruption, such sinful actions would be no longer unlawful actions; and what a contradiction that would be, for "where there is no law, there is no transgression."

*Mr. Steadym.* Indeed Mr. Henry, it appears to me that I might have gone all the days of my life to hear Mr. Dulman at Ruckford, and still continued as ignorant of the law as if I had been a downright heathen. Nay, as for my part, I do not know that I ever heard any thing further about the law, than what a heathen may practise quite as well as a Christian. At one time we are told we must not get drunk; then that we must not curse and swear; then that we should pay our debts; and then that we must come to Church and keep the Sabbath; and it was but poor sort of Sabbath keeping after all: for he says that he cannot see any harm in a few innocent recreations, after we have properly attended our duty at the Church; and this is the cause to my way of thinking, why our Parish is so abominably wicked; for as to the morality, that was all forgotten as soon as ever they got to their pastimes and sports.

*Far.* Aye, and just in the same way Mr. Dolittle used to "daub me over with his untempered mortar;" for though I was not so strict and moral, as you

have been brother Steadyman, yet as I kept pretty *tight* to my Church, and used to act *good-naturedly* towards my neighbours, and as our *Parson* used to say of me, when he used to hear of me in my *tipsey fits*, I had a *good heart at bottom*; I thought if I had religion enough to please him, I had religion enough to please God; and that I need not concern myself about any thing further; especially as I thought he could do such wonderful things for me when I came to die, by the assistance of the holy sacrament and his absolution.

*Hen.* Ah! but uncle, such sorts of notions will never make out what Mr. Lovegood said about the law from the word of God, how it is “the letter that killeth, and the ministration of death and of condemnation.” If the law required nothing but outward sobriety and morality, I suppose you never transgressed it; and then the Bible is not true, that says, “we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God,” and that consequently “judgment is passed upon all men to condemnation.”

*Mr. Steadym.* Why I have no more a desire to make myself a beast by getting drunk, than I have a desire to go and lie to-night in brother’s hog-stye; and as for outward integrity between man and man; I thought myself almost to be a little god upon that account; because people would say of me, that they would rather trust me upon my word, than believe many others upon their oath; though I now see what a foolish and vain creature I have been to harbour such proud thoughts on my own goodness. But I did not quite understand what Mr. Lovegood meant, by the law being “the ministration of death and condemnation.”

*Hen.* Why you know, when any one commits a capital offence by transgressing the laws of his country, then the law administers condemnation and death to that man; and when he is given over to the executioner, he loses his life by the letter of that law, and therefore it is “the letter that killeth.” Now you

know uncle, the first and great command is, that we "should love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and minds, and souls, and strength;" but our blinded consciences think little or nothing of living in the perpetual neglect of love to God; while we are much more alarmed, if we neglect those rules of morality which we ought always to observe between man and man. Thus we live in the entire neglect of the duties of the first table, that tell us what we should be before God, and think that all will be well, if we keep up a little outward decency in attending to the duties of the second table, which direct us how to act among our neighbours.

*Mr. Steadym.* But how Mr. Lovegood talked about the spirituality of the law, and what a holy frame of mind was needed before we can ever love God, and that we can practise nothing that is truly good before God, unless we love him. That it is impossible that any man can repent of sin till he hate it, and that sin never is hated till God is loved: and how plainly he made it out, that without this love to God we can never pray aright, believe aright, or do any thing aright.

*Far.* Ah brother Steadyman, and so I found it with me, directly as I took to go to Brookfield Church; for though I had much more reason than ever you had to find fault with the *outward* wickedness of my actions, yet I then felt the worst of the evil lay in the *inward* wickedness of my heart; that as I knew nothing what it was to love God, so I had no heart nor inclination to do any thing that was good in his sight. Never till then could I say with Job, though so much more holy than any of us, "Behold I am vile!" O! what strange foolish creatures we must have been in the midst of our wickedness, to think that we were righteous, when God's word so plainly says, "There are none righteous, no not one."

*Miss Nancy.* Well, as for my part, I never thought whether my heart was either good or bad, or any

thing about it, only I thought it was wrong to oppose people because they were desirous to be better than myself; but I never properly saw what a state I was in till I heard Mr. Lovegood preach upon that text out of the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done," and then I saw, as he explained it, I never did the will of the Lord in all my life-time, and that I never could do it so as to please God, till I had a new heart.

*Mr. Steadym.* A new heart! Aye, I heard Mr. Lovegood make use of that expression.

*Hen.* Yes, and can't you remember what he said? how that God never wrote his holy law but upon the tables of a new heart; and that every sinner without a new heart is in a condemned and ruined state; and that all we do in such a state is sin, because done from a sinful principle?\*

*Mr. Steadym.* Well, till this day I always thought I had as good a *chance* for heaven as any of my neighbours, but I never considered the state of my heart before God.

*Far.* Ah brother, there is the *gripe*. When we think of our actions before man only, though now and then we get ourselves daubed and dirtied, yet we suppose by a little of the white-wash of morality, we can soon cover all this. But when we look at the state of our hearts, how can we think of justifying ourselves before him?

*Mr. Steadym.* Well I shall never think I shall be able to justify myself before God any more. What the publican said I must say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

*Hen.* How heartily glad am I, uncle, that you now understand it. "By the law," or by the knowledge of the law, "is the knowledge of sin;" for this is the only way we can come by the knowledge of the glorious doctrine of salvation by Christ alone. And how wonderfully well our Minister preached upon that subject in the afternoon.

\* See Article the XIIIth,—Of Works before Justification.



*Mrs. Lit.* Why Patty child, how you sit yawning! What are you going to sleep?

*Miss Patty.* Why is not going to church once or twice on a Sunday religion enough for any body, without having so much of it over and over again after supper?

*Mrs. Lit.* Well well, if you and Polly don't love to hear any more talk about these matters, you had better put away the things into the pantry, for we have all done supper. [To the Farmer.] Master, shall you want any more drink?

*Far.* Oh no mistress, you may put it all away: but let us see, [The Farmer takes out his watch,] it is not above five minutes after nine by the town-hall clock at Mapleton; and if our poor daughters don't like our conversation, yet I think it will do brother Steadyman, and us no harm, if we sit up a little longer, to talk about the good things we have been hearing this day at Brookfield church.

*Mr. Steadym.* I admire that your Minister takes such different texts to preach from, to what Mr. Dulman, and such sort of Ministers chuse to *head* their sermons with. And then when they have taken their text, we hear very little more of the Bible, but only about some moral duty we ought to perform, and against some evil practice that people ought to avoid. I never heard that text preached upon before, which Mr. Lovegood took this afternoon, "that God might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus," and at first I could not conceive what he could make of it.

*Far.* Why it is the sum and substance of all the Bible.

*Mr. Steadym.* So I thought, when he came to open it. What a deal of pains he takes to make the people understand the Bible.

*Far.* Whenever he has shewn us our *ruination* in ourselves, he is sure to tell us of our redemption in Christ.

*Mr. Steadym.* Well, I never thought of any Christ till to-day, but my own good works.

*Mrs. Steadym.* Why Nathaniel, and what can you have better than good works? There is nothing like them, I am sure; don't tell me: good works are better than all the faith in the world. I am afraid I shall be plagued to death by your new notions in religion, and I shall not like that; and if you take to go after *parson* Meek, you sha'nt be taking him a pocket-full of money every time you go there. Don't you know that we have got a family?

*Mrs. Lit.* Why sister, I used to be very cross with my husband, when I suspected that he gave away his money to Mr. Lovegood's followers; but I don't know how it is, we have prospered more of late than ever.

*Far.* Ah sister, we have all enough of this world; it would be well for us if we thought a little more of the next. But I remember the time when I used to keep up a *main bustle* about my good works, but it was when I did nothing but bad ones. Now I never thought of leading a new life, till after God had given me a new heart, and we know that good faith will produce good fruits; but it will never do to turn religion *topsy turvey*.

*Hen.* Let me see; I think I put down something that Mr. Lovegood said to-day on that subject, (looking at his notes,) here it is, he brought these three texts, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." ---"Faith worketh by love."---"Love is the fulfilling of the law." So that unless we are "rooted and grounded in the faith of the gospel," we shall never bring forth any fruit unto God.

*Mr. Steadym.* Well, well, I now see I have been trusting upon the decency of a heathen, without the spirituality of a Christian. O brother! I am sure I need to cry as much as any did that heard St. Peter's sermon, what shall I do to be saved! I have been such an ignorant and neglectful sinner.

*Far.* Why, did you not hear at Church, how "God could be just, while he was the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus?" whatever sort of sinners they may have been. Was it not worth while to go a thousand miles to hear such a charming sermon, and so much of the precious love of Christ to such perishing sinners?

*Mr. Steadym.* I was so much affected, while he explained to us the love of Christ in dying for our redemption, that I scarce knew where I was, it so overcame me.

*Far.* Dear brother, how thankful I am that ever you came with us this day to Brookfield Church. How this brings to my mind, when Thomas first persuaded me to go there, and Mr. Lovegood was then preaching upon these words, "Christ died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God!" how was my heart melted down under that sermon; I was all admiration, how Christ could find it in his heart to save such a wicked wretch;---and when poor Thomas saw me so affected, for till after I had heard Mr. Lovegood, I never dropped a tear about the state of my soul in all my life, he quite cried and sobbed; [Farmer drops a tear] but brother, they were all tears of joy, because he thought the Lord was then saving my soul, and breaking my hard heart; and when Mr. Lovegood happened to look that way, and see what a state we were both in, he was as much affected as either of us. How he wept, and preached about the precious promises of the gospel! He was so overcome that he could hardly go on; and as to myself, I had several times almost swooned away.

*Mr. Steadym.* Mr. Lovegood seemed very much affected this afternoon.

*Far.* I dare say he saw you affected; and it is amazing how glad he is at heart, when he can but see such poor creatures as we all are, melted down under a sense of the love of Christ our Savior to such vile sinners.

*Hen.* O father! can't you remember the first night I came home, how we were all affected while at family prayer when he mentioned that text, what "joy there is in heaven over one sinner that repenteth!" What a time of love was that to all our souls!

*Nancy.* Why Mr. Lovegood seemed to look very much our way, especially when he was explaining how the justice of God was glorified in the death of Christ; that the mercy of God might be also glorified in the salvation of sinners.

*Mr. Steadym.* What strange conceptions I have had about these things; I used to suppose that nothing was required by Mr. Lovegood's followers, but that if they had faith in Christ, no matter what they were, or how they lived. But now I begin to see if Christ does not pardon me by the shedding of his blood, I never can be pardoned! and that my heart must be changed, or I shall be ruined for ever.

*Hen.* And when we come to compare not only our actions, but our hearts with God's law, "Who shall stand when he appeareth?" But this does not remove our obligations to obey the law; and it is from a sense of our obligations to obey it, because it is in itself holy, just, and good, that we are made to be ashamed that we have so transgressed it.

*Far.* O no brother! we can never "live in sin, that grace may abound;" for "how shall we who are dead unto sin, live any longer therein?"

*Mr. Steadym.* Why that used to puzzle me, when I saw you and Harry and others, that were followers of Mr. Lovegood, so different in your way of living to what you were before. I always thought it very strange that such bad doctrines should teach people to live better lives. Mr. Dulman came a day or two before we came here, on purpose to tell us, that all the people about these parts were for free grace, that they might live as they list.

*Hen.* Much he understands what is meant by grace, when he talks in that manner; for the Bible

tells us, "sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under the law, but under grace;" and that "the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and godly, and righteously in this present world;" for that we now "reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ."

*Mr. Steadym.* But I remember he contradicted himself the same evening, by saying, he had no notion of people being so over strict in their religion. I never went much by Mr. Dulman's religion; for his father meant to bring him up to the law, but he soon found he had not sense enough for that, and therefore said he was only fit for a parson; but I am sure I heard no such notions about grace at your Church; and from what happened not long since, he seems to me to have no idea at all of the meaning of the Bible: for an old lady who was supposed to have some very odd notions in religion, because she now and then used to attend a little meeting in our town, left him a guinea to preach a funeral sermon; and she said what the text was to be; let me see—there were some such words in it as these, "Not having on my own righteousness which is by the law." I recollect that much of it; but I remember that some people in our town supposed there was no such text in all the Bible. Brother Littleworth, where is that text? but I hope I shall mind my Bible more than I have done.

*Far.* Harry my child, is it not in the Philippians?

*Hen.* [Taking out his pocket Bible.] Yes father, it is the 3d chapter of the Philippians, and the whole text runs thus; "I count all things as dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

*Mr. Steadym.* Well now, all that Mr. Lovegood



has been saying, seems to me wonderfully to have explained that text; but poor Mr. Dulman could not make it out at any rate! it is said that he went over on purpose to Mr. Blindman, to know if he could borrow from him, or any other Clergyman, a sermon on that text, and he supposed that it was quite impossible that a proper funeral sermon could be made on such a text.

*Far.* So I should suppose, according to his way of thinking, when every poor sinner is to be *tossed up* into heaven by the merit of his own righteousness. But brother, what was the *upshot*?

*Mr. Steadym.* Why, when he came to preach the sermon, he plainly told the people that he could not understand why the old lady should chuse such a text, that had puzzled all the Divines round about the country: and that as in St. Paul's Epistles there were many things "hard to be understood," he would not himself be so presumptuous as to explain it; but that he would give us the best sermon he had on a funeral occasion.

*Far.* Ah! but if Mr. Lovegood had been to handle that subject, I'll warrant he would have given us a *rare* sermon upon it. But you know it is said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

*Hen.* Well uncle, I hope that text will never puzzle you any more, as it has Mr. Dulman. But as to the accusation, that such Ministers have to make against Mr. Lovegood, as though what he preached gave people a licence to live in sin; I am sure in himself there is not a better man living; and he is never so happy, as when all his hearers live after the same good example, as we at all times have from him. But he did not leave us in the dark about this matter in his sermons to day. You know how highly he spoke of the purity, and excellency, and

goodness of the law, in the morning, and that as we were eternally bound to obey it, so it was most just and righteous in God to punish us for our transgressions; but then he did not tell us, that we were pardoned by the death of Christ, that we might *live in sin*, but that we might be *saved from sin*. And cannot you remember how he insisted on it in the afternoon, that every one redeemed from sin by the blood of Christ, would have his heart renewed by the grace of the Holy Spirit; and you know uncle, it is utterly impossible, when our hearts are thus made holy, that our lives should be unholy. A good principle is sure to produce a good practice.

*Mr. Steadym.* Well, I confess I see things in a very different light from what I ever saw them before. How glad I should be if my business would let me stop over Wednesday, that I might hear Mr. Lovegood preach another sermon.

*Nancy.* Why father, suppose you and uncle were to go down and talk to Mr. Lovegood to-morrow morning; I am sure he would be very glad to see you.

*Far.* Aye, that I am sure he would. I never shall forget in what a loving and kind way he first talked to me, after I was convinced of my sinful state. Shall we go brother?

*Mr. Steadym.* I am quite a stranger to him. I should be ashamed to take such a liberty; besides how I should expose my ignorance.

*Far.* Nay but brother, does any man keep from fire when he is cold, or from victuals when he is hungry? My son Harry can look after the workmen to-morrow, and you and I will ride down to Brookfield. I know from blessed experience, how well our Minister has been taught, like his blessed Master, "to shew compassion to the ignorant, and them that are out of the way."

*Mr. Steadym.* Well brother, I'll think of it, and to-morrow morning at breakfast I'll let you know.

*Mrs. Steadym.* I say to-morrow morning too! I think we shall none of us be in bed till to-morrow morning, for at this rate we shall not have done talking about religion to-night.

*Mrs. Lit.* Why sister, though I cannot *take in* my husband's religion, yet I never got any good by thwarting him in this fashion. I must say it before both our masters, they have been very good husbands to us, as husbands in general now go.

*Far.* Well, well dame, as sister is tired, and the girls have put away the things, let us have family prayer and go to bed.

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On this occasion it was Henry's turn to read. He read the two chapters out of which the texts were taken, and afterwards the farmer went to prayer, but in the middle of his prayer, while he was offering up some humble supplications on behalf of his brother and sister; he was so overwhelmed by a holy anxiety for their salvation, and his speech was so interrupted by his tears, that prayer was abruptly concluded; this however, gave an opportunity for another act of devotion for the conclusion of the family service.

Mr. Lovegood having a poetic turn, was in the habit of composing a few verses of a hymn, suitably to his subject, which the congregation sang after the sermon, and which Henry Littleworth was accustomed to take down as Mr. Lovegood gave it out. It was therefore proposed that the hymn sung at Church at the afternoon service, should be repeated at evening family prayer, of which the following is a copy.

DEAR JESUS, we thy name adore,  
Our holy Savior and our King;  
We own thy sov'reign love and pow'r,  
And of thy great salvation sing.

And shall we then in sin proceed?  
Ungrateful and rebellious prove?  
Make all thy wounds afresh to bleed,  
And thus requite thy dying love?

Forbid it Lord! May ev'ry soul  
The hated thought at once disdain;  
The pow'r of sin thou canst controul;  
No rival lust with thee shall reign.

Objects that once gave high delight,  
Through grace are now detested grown  
In vain forbidden joys invite,  
Since now the vicious taste is gone.

Dead to ourselves, and dead to sin,  
In Christ our better hopes revive;  
Th' immortal pulse now beats within,  
While quicken'd by our God we live.

Beams of celestial light descend,  
To renovate the carnal mind;  
With wings full stretch'd to God we bend,  
And leave this worthless world behind.

In free submission low we fall  
Before our dear Redeemer's throne,  
To him with joy devote our all,  
And live and die to him alone.

On the morrow morning, Mr. Steadyman was persuaded to make the visit to Mr. Lovegood. The conversation was, we doubt not, edifying and good; but the reader is requested to wait till after the writer's next summer's excursion, when he hopes to call on Mr. Lovegood, that he may know more correctly the state of Mr. Steadyman's mind.

The writer however, has already obtained sufficient information of the knowledge of matters at Brookfield, so as to form a conjecture, that it is not probable Mr. Steadyman can long attend the ministry of Mr. Dulman: and that though Mr. Meek is a man of a good and sound mind, yet not of great

preaching ability; and also that he' will find his church at too great a distance for his regular attendance, though not for his occasional visits: and that therefore, when he became inquisitive after the truth of the gospel, he discovered there was in the same town a worthy dissenting Minister, whom in the days of his ignorance he had overlooked; whose life was exemplary, and who had preached more of the doctrines of the church of England in his meeting, in one sermon, than was to be heard in the church for seven years together; and there is no doubt, but when Mr. Lovegood hears this, though in himself from principles and conscience a Minister of the established church, he will advise Mr. Steadyman to seek after the word of life, wherever he can find it.

Mr. Lovegood is a man of enlarged and generous mind; knowing therefore that the mere reading of the church prayers, however excellent in themselves, is not the general means of salvation, it is his opinion that a preached gospel, should be principally sought for in every Christian church, or congregation.

The writer of these Dialogues, having also at an early stage of his ministry, in a measure been driven from out of that line of the sanctuary service, in which Mr. Lovegood is called to labor, confesses that he still retains his partiality for that service; but as he sees, that a gracious God does not *all* his work in *one* line, and as he laments how much the members of different societies are cramped by their restrictive laws, he equally abhors that spirit of *schism*\* and

\* In this definition, our good and wise reformers, had a reference to other protestant churches abroad; which though not settled precisely according to the model adopted with us, yet were still real churches of Christ. And while our pious reformers could shew all this truly Christian candour towards our brethren abroad, why is it that the same spirit of patience and forbearance, cannot be manifested among ourselves at home?



separation, set up by party against party, against the true church of Christ at large, which is so beautifully defined in one of our own church articles, as being “ a congregation of faithful men, in which the word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same ”

## DIALOGUE XV.

BETWEEN MR. AND MRS. LOVEGOOD; MR. MRS. AND  
MISS WORTHY; THE FARMER; HENRY; AND  
MISS NANCY.

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ON THE EVILS OF THE SLAVE TRADE, CONCLUDED.

**A**FTER the return of Mr. Worthy and family from Lancashire, the engagement with Mr. Lovegood was attended to. Though the pride of Miss Polly and Miss Patty, was considerably gratified by their visit at Mr. Worthy's, yet as Mr. and Mrs. Lovegood were constrained to live in a more humble style, they were glad of some frivolous family excuse to stay at home. Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Worthy, the Farmer, Henry, and Nancy, were the whole of the party.

For the sake of brevity, the tea table conversation is omitted; one circumstance alone shall be recorded. Mr. Lovegood's vicarage was by no means lucrative; and though he had a wife whose fortune did not annually produce above thirty pounds, and there were four children to be maintained from this small pittance, still it was far from his disposition to extort from his parishioners the utmost penny he could demand by law, knowing well the infinite injury that is done to the cause of religion, by such a mercenary conduct, in so many of the clerical order; yet he still received much more than an equivalent from the hands of those, who knew his worth. Many had experienced that the best of consequences had been the happy result of his ministry among them.

A temperature of conduct, had by the grace of God, directed them to be frugal in their personal indulgences, that they might be liberal to the necessities of others. Such naturally became the real friends of Mr. Lovegood; and thus, while his heart was at all times too tender to receive even his accustomed dues from the hard hand of honest industry, while he has been frequently known rather to give than receive, where poverty prevailed; yet others, knowing that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," brought forward their free will offerings in kind abundance. In the lists of such contributors, the name of farmer Littleworth was registered in course. On his arrival, therefore from Graehill Farm, the Farmer pulled out a pound of tea from his great coat pocket; Miss Nancy took into the pantry a pan of butter salted down for the winter's service of the family; while by Mr. Henry's kindness a sack of flour was secretly conveyed into the pantry; all which presents were the more thankfully received, as they were given with the entire approbation of Mrs. Littleworth, she having now sufficient evidence that these little tokens of benevolence, were no burden to the family, compared to the extravagance which was among them, when they were all living "without God in the world."

[Dolly, Mr. Lovegood's maid, the only servant they could afford to keep, having cleared the tea table, the conversation was thus resumed.]

*Far.* How glad we all were to hear the bells ring so charmingly, and to see the chimnies smoke so *rarely* at the hall, on your honor's return last Saturday!

*Wor.* Why Mr. Littleworth, we stopped somewhat shorter than we designed; for last Sunday, when we were at Wellford church we found ourselves quite out of our element; the Minister seemed to be taking a deal of pains to make out how the *secret* influences of the Holy Spirit, which he seemed not altogether to deny, were still *imperceptible*.

*Far.* 'Las Sir! what things these *larned* clergy will say. I remember once when I had a *main bout* with Mr. Dolittle on that head. But how can we know or have any perceptions about things that are imperceptible. [To Mr. Lovegood] A'in't I right Sir, in my poor notions on that head?

*Loveg.* Why it appears to me, the best evidence you can have that you are right in that point, will arise from your own experience; and in this respect, blessed be God for the change which has been wrought upon your mind, and that is the best evidence to you, that religion is not *imperceptible*. But let us charitably suppose, that the Ministers who make such remarks, are unhappily mistaken, respecting our interpretation of these glorious truths. They conceive that we are ever preaching up the necessity of feeling a set of wild visionary impulses upon the mind; whereby, at one time we are precisely to know the moment we were convinced of sin, and then as precisely tell the moment by another impression, when we were pardoned. Now while I am sorry for the just offence which has been given by too many who have submitted to such wild impulses of the imagination; yet to urge the charge of enthusiasm promiscuously against those who can, according to the 17th article, seriously say, "They feel in themselves the workings of the spirit of Christ," or in other words, the spirit of purity and holiness, which must be *felt* in all who have it, is utterly unjust.

*Wor.* But after all that has been said to the contrary from the press and the pulpit, can this be a sufficient apology for those, who suppose the offence committed by a few wild-headed visionaries, is to be justly urged against all? yea, and to make this a pretence to deny, or virtually to deny, all those divine influences in which consist the very essence and soul of Christianity. In the name of wonder and common sense, what good can be had from *imperceptible* influences? Is not the mind as much

capable of perceptions or feelings as the body, if not more so? And must we not all feel the motives by which we act? And is a man an enthusiast, because by the grace of God he *feels* himself wise and good, whereas he once *felt* himself wicked and foolish?

*Loveg.* I thought the Minister of Wellford preached somewhat more consistently with the truth, and the doctrines of the Church.

*Wor.* At one time you would say, he aims well, and that he would hit the mark. Then again he seems to fly off, and appears as wide as ever; but he is a man of a decent and a respectable behavior, and sets a much better example than many others of the Clergy in that neighbourhood. I gave him Venn's Complete Duty of Man, and Witherspoon on Regeneration, and he accepted them very kindly.

*Far.* The Lord make the books a blessing to his soul! But when I went to Mapleton church, I remember Mr. Dolittle used to give us some sermons about *all-hallows tide* of the same sort; but then to my mind it seems, that whenever they happen to hit upon the truth, it is done all by chance, *as the blind man shot the crow.*

*Wor.* But Mr. Henry, we have met this evening that you may give us some further account about the matters in Antigua.

*Hen.* Why Sir, the first thing I have to say is, that I perceive real Christianity is the same in all; and there is no difference in any as it respects the grace of God, whatever difference there may be in the color of our skins.

*Loveg.* I remember you told us a little about the first slave you got acquainted with, poor Sancho; what you said of him then,\* makes me very anxious to hear more about him, and especially what he told you respecting his being brought to the knowledge of the truth.

\* Dialogue the 8th.



*Hen.* He was never so happy as when he was telling us the story of the converting grace of God upon his heart, and amidst all his afflictions that he had undergone, he would ever be crying “de best is all to come.”

*Wor.* But Mr. Henry, had we not better first be informed of his history from the beginning, and afterwards hear of his conversion. Your father says it is an interesting story.

*Far.* Do my child, tell all about it, as you told it to Billy Traffick the other night at our house.

*Hen.* I'll recollect it father, to the best of my power. In Africa the men have frequently more wives than one, and no wonder at it, the men not being so numerous as the women, on account of so many of them being cut off by this bloody traffic; and it seems poor Sancho's father had two wives. For the sake of this horrid plunder their town was, as they call it, *broken up*, and Sancho's family escaped through the back door of their hut.

*Far.* Why my child, I should never have thought that they had a back and a fore door, according to their poor way of living.

*Hen.* The back door father, is only designed for their escape when we *Christian* Europeans, as we are called, invade their land; which they have as good a natural right to as you have to your farm; and that back door they always contrive as the device to escape the *hell-hounds* that come after them from this country.

*Loveg.* Hell-hounds Mr. Henry!—why surely that was one of the words you were accustomed to use on board of ship, before you were instructed to use milder language.

*Hen.* Oh no Sir, either on board of ship or on dry land, it is the best expression I can think of for those sort of men. I can hardly conceive where such people can get their commission, but from Hell itself; and I believe, you will say the same, when I have told you poor Sancho's story

*Wor.* Well then Mr. Henry, go on; but I fear it will be a disgraceful tale.

*Hen.* Sir, I told you how Sancho's family escaped through this back door, when a Liverpool trader came to assist one of their petty kings to *break up* the town in which they lived. Guns and cutlasses, imported by us, rendered them successful in their engagement; and then Sancho well remembers, that women and children had nothing left them, but to escape as well as they could from these tigers in human shape.

*Wor.* What a scandal to our land, that these licensed tigers should ever have had it in their power to say, they are allowed from a land of liberty to entail slavery, and wantonly to murder so many thousands of innocent sufferers, sacrificed at the altar of our luxury and pride! But I interrupt you Mr. Henry, pray continue your story.

*Hen.* It was not a very probable circumstance that the escape of poor Sancho's family could be attended with much success; his father having two wives, one of whom was near her time, the other with a sucking child at her breast, and four other little children with them; Sancho being the eldest of the family, and he not more than ten years of age. Poor Sancho says, he well remembers, that the first who was overtaken was his own mother, the woman who was big with child: but as she was at first seized only by a single man, they thought they might rescue her. Her husband therefore hastily took one of the youngest of his children from off his back, and having placed it upon the ground, screaming with misery and fright, he and Sancho ran back to rescue her. This they accomplished, and the family had another run for their lives and liberties; but having lost much time in the rescue, they were still pursued and overtaken by others. Sancho's father was soon joined by another man, who was also trying to make his escape. They resisted their pursuers as long as they could, that the women and children, if possible, might make their escape into the neighbouring woods. But the

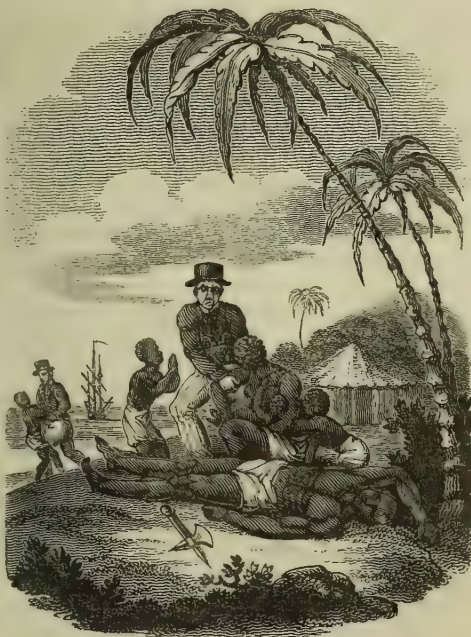
pursuers supposing their lives were in danger, especially by the determined resolution of poor Sancho's father, who was a strong young fellow; and fearing lest others should come down upon them, fired at him, and killed him dead on the spot.

*Wor.* What a horrible scene of misery does all this exhibit before us! But what became of the poor women and children after they saw their only defender drop down, *murdered* before their eyes?

*Hen.* O Sir! Sancho says he well remembers the horrid screams of misery and despair he heard from the women, the moment they saw his poor father fall: nor could it be supposed, that while they were thus overcome, and distracted with grief, they could be long out of the hands of the bloody pursuers. Thus they availed themselves of the two women and five children, though they conceived that they were obliged to murder the husband, whom they would have been glad to have spared, as it would have answered more for their interest to have sold him, than to murder him.

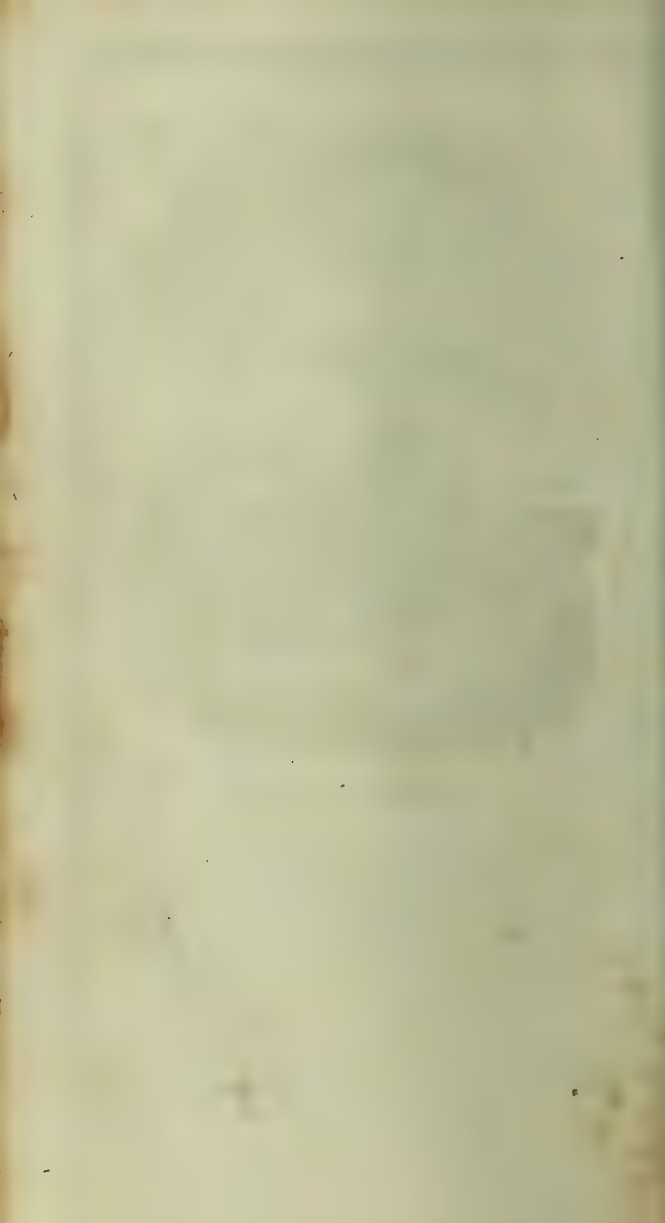
*Wor.* Could any thing be more shocking? how we should even have rejoiced at the hanging of such thieves and murderers in our own land. But Mr. Henry, I suppose you have a deal more to tell us about Sancho, and the further calamities of his family.

*Hen.* Oh Sir! poor Sancho can scarcely now tell the story, but what he drops a tear, when he recollects how they were all dragged back by the bleeding corpse of his father, asking for liberty to see if any life might be yet left in him, or to fall upon him and embrace him for the last time, while weltering in his blood. But away back to the town that had just been *broken up*, were they dragged; there to see its inhabitants scattered, and every little comfort they had among themselves laid waste, and then to bid it an eternal farewell. And even after all this, they went in quest of the father and mother of the murdered man, to see if they answered their purpose.



### SANCHO'S FATHER KILLED.

*Henry.* Oh, sir! poor Sancho can scarcely now tell the story, but what he drops a tear, when he recollects how they were all dragged back by the bleeding corpse of his father, asking for liberty to see if any life might be yet left in him, or to fall upon him and embrace him for the last time, while weltering in his blood. But away back to the town that had just been *broken up* were they dragged; there to see its inhabitants scattered, and every little comfort they had among themselves laid waste; and then to bid it an eternal farewell. And even after all this, they went in quest of the father and mother of the murdered man, to see if they answered their purpose.





*Wor.* What! and were they also added to the list of their bloody trophies?

*Hen.* As far as I could learn from Sancho, it was some time before they could find them, but when they discovered the man to be upwards of fifty, and his wife not much less, they *mercifully* left them behind, because they would not answer the end of their detestable traffic; and it seems, as they call it, they were pretty *full slaved* already, and mostly with young slaves, which answers their end best, as the old ones are more apt to die with the *sulks*, or hang themselves as soon as they can get an opportunity, after they have been sold.

*Wor.* Is it common then for them to put an end to their present existence even after they are sold?

*Hen.* Sir, when I was off Jamaica, I myself saw three of them together one morning, who had hanged themselves in the night; and I am told this is an event so very common, that a law is likely to pass prohibiting the importation, but under a certain age.

*Wor.* A fine story truly! to be told, that we better their situation in life, by transporting them from Africa, when it seems they would rather hang themselves than accept it. But what became of these poor creatures during the middle passage.\*

*Hen.* Why Sancho told me, that soon after they were all put on board a slave ship, his mother was taken in labor, and delivered of a dead child. The slave captain having been informed by the ship doctor that it was next to impossible for her to survive the passage, and considering also, that she would only take the room of another who might fetch a better price, they *humanely* set her adrift to shift for herself, in that wretched condition; and the first dance poor Sancho had upon deck, was when he was made to

\* The slave trader was accustomed to make three voyages: the first from England to the coast of Africa, where he gets his horrid cargo; then to the West-Indies, or other parts; this is called the middle passage; and then returns to England to refit.

skip and jump about at the lash of the whip, lest he should die of the *sulks*, because his poor heart was ready to break at the loss of his father, and afterwards at being for ever separated from his mother. However Sancho says, not a little art was made use of to raise the spirits of the other women, by promising them that they should all live comfortably together; but grief immediately depriving her of her milk, she had then nothing left but to water her child with her tears, whilst she presented it with her dry breasts, and it soon after died in the mother's arms. Still the slave captain supposed he had a good booty in the family, as there were three boys and one girl, all of them between three and ten; and half-reared children, as I have before observed, are always supposed best to suit their purpose. It seems however, that the rest of the *unmurdered* cargo, belonging to this family were all landed; the poor weakly woman was scarcely alive when they were put up for sale. She went only for five pounds, while Sancho sold for seventy, and the other children for nearly the same. But dear Sancho little then knew that he was more highly valued by our blessed Lord, whose infinitely precious blood was shed for his redemption.

*Loveg.* How often have the most wicked devices of some, been over-ruled for the salvation of others. I remember hearing when I was a curate at Abley, how a man was determined to find out the wicked tricks of his wife, who occasionally attended a meeting for prayer at a village in that neighbourhood: and as the Lord was pleased to over-rule it, one of the company offered up a most tender and affectionate prayer, for some then under persecution, that the lions of the world might not tear asunder the lambs of Christ's flock, but that by his grace, every lion might be turned into a lamb; and there is every reason to believe it was the means of his conversion to God. But Mr. Henry, I must not interrupt you: finish your story.

*Hen.* Sancho well remembers, that when they were

sold, he and the girl being brother and sister, were sold together; but Sancho knew nothing after that for some years, of the other two children, and the woman who was their mother; and then he found that the woman lived not above a month, and perished in a neglected state, but had the happiness to hear that both his brothers constantly attended the Moravian ministry, and that there was no doubt but one of them was truly converted to God.

*Wor.* Then they were allowed to live together, according to promise.

*Hen.* Promises from an African slave-trader, are very rarely thought of after they are made. But in this respect, they had as much tenderness as is usually granted, to let the mother go with her own children, which now I am told, is more frequently done than formerly, as it answers their own interest best.

*Loveg.* Such sort of mercy reminds me of that passage, "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel;" for what consolation could this be to the woman, or her poor infants, while she was dying with neglect. But it should seem, upon the whole of this business, that three in one family were virtually murdered, that four poor innocent children might be doomed to perpetual slavery, when it was utterly impossible that they could deserve it.

*Wor.* I think you should also take into the account the poor infant who died through the hard treatment of the mother, just before the time of her delivery.

*Far.* [To Mr. Worthy] If your honor could find out that any poor parish 'prentice was treated half as bad, I am sure you would give them to know *the rights of it*; but it is wonderful to me, that there is no bringing people to justice for such dreadful doings.

[Mr. Lovegood's eldest daughter, about five years old, comes in all in tears.]

*Mrs. Loveg.* O my dear! you should not come into

the parlour without leave when there is company.--- But what is the matter?

*Child.* Mamma, Prettyface will die.---John Cheeseman came to try to make her well again, but he says, he is sure she will die, and then what shall we do, we shall never go a milking any more.

*Wor.* Alas, alas! what can be the cause of these sad lamentations?

*Mrs. Loveg.* O Sir! our poor cow that you were so kind as to give us, the beginning of last winter, has met with a terrible calamity, by being goaded by some other cows on the common, and we made bold to send to your cow-keeper, to beg of him to look at her after he had done work: for it used to be a high treat to our little ones, to go and feed and milk the cow.

*Wor.* [To the child] Never mind my dear; there are more cows than one in the country. I dare say, we shall find another Prettyface, who will give her milk to your brothers, and little sister that is in the cradle.

*Loveg.* Oh Sir! I wish the child had not mentioned it. You quite overpower us with your favors.

*Wor.* Indeed while you provide us so plentifully with "the sincere milk of the word," and at so low a rate, the least that we can do, will be to provide you with a little milk for your family.---[Should this part of the Dialogue be continued, the modesty of the parties might be considerably offended. As the author has therefore the highest respect for Mr. Lovegood and Mr. Worthy; and as he would not upon any account, forfeit the honor and favor of preaching in Mr. Lovegood's church, whenever he goes that way, he begs leave to drop this part of the subject, and proceed.]

*Mrs. Wor.* I hope Mr. Henry, you have now told us of all the evils poor Sancho has been called to suffer; and I am sure you have related enough to chill one's blood. We shall be glad to hear next what

were the merciful providences which brought him to the knowledge of the Gospel.

*Hen.* Alas madam ! there was a deal to be undone upon poor Sancho's mind before any thing could be done. He has oftentimes told me of his dread and hatred of the Christian's God, before he knew better ; and to be sure, his ideas on this subject were not less natural than curious.

*Loveg.* What were they Mr. Henry ?

*Hen.* One night, soon after he was landed in Antigua, and while he was seeking rest for his distracted mind, which he rarely could meet with ; he verily thought it must be more than a dream, for that he actually saw the Christian's God, and that he was an uncommon tall white \* monster, for that he was a god of a very powerful nation ; and as his worshippers were always calling upon him, to *damn* and *blast* and *curse* almost every one they spoke to, he supposed him to be a cruel and mischievous god indeed. No wonder therefore that Sancho's imagination further represented this large monster to him, though of human shape, yet as having on his shoulders a most horrid tiger's head, with jaws capable of devouring fifty or a hundred of our fellow creatures at a meal ; that round his head there were an innumerable quantity of all sorts of serpents and scorpions, and of all sizes ; that his paunch or maw, was of such an uncommon size, as made him appear a monster indeed ; that he had not only the head, but the paws of a tiger, both on his arms and legs ; and that it was most frightful to see how he could tear up the ground, and all that came in his way with his horrid talons : that he had a tail of such an amazing length, with a fiery sting at the end of it, that whenever he whisked it about, he did uncommon mischief thereby : that he had all around his immensely large body, a prodigious number of casks of rum and gunpowder ; with swords, guns,

\* Men of color have a peculiar abhorrence of the idea of white.—And well they may.



cutlasses and all other instruments of war, in terrible and vast abundance, that were made for him by the 'Christians who worship him: and that when he arose to shake himself, the noise was most tremendous. That this horrid, monstrous, white god of the Christians, had a detestable partiality to the creatures of his own making: and that he frequently strided over the seas, that he might satiate his bloody appetite upon the poor Africans: that thousands of his little white imps were ordered to attend him in the different slave-trade ships: that as soon as they are all landed, he had nothing to do but to stand upright and to look all around him, to see if he could find any peaceable, quiet towns, which were ignorant of his arrival, from this his *Christian* country; that then he would whisk his most tremendous tail over that country, as a signal to all his imps to plunder and murder as fast as they could; distributing among them his casks, arms, and ammunition, for that purpose; and then as fast as these captives could be brought to him by his bloody imps, he would swallow them down by scores: that one morning he came over from the Christian's country so hungry, that he devoured "four thousand five hundred at one meal;\*" and that he is scarcely satisfied unless his imps procure him a hundred thousand, year by year; and that when his maw begins to be so full that he can gorge no more, the rest of them he gives over to the care of his *buckra*† imps, who take them beyond the seas, that they may be kept for him, so that he may send for them, or come after them, when he thinks proper to devour them. Such was Sancho's idea of the God of *buckra* men; and the dream, or vision was so strong upon his mind; that he could scarcely persuade himself it was not a reality.

*Loveg.* Indeed his idea of the Christian's god is not

\* Which was the case in one of those horrid wars to procure slaves.

† The Negro name for a white man.

less natural, than our crimes are enormous. But what opinion had he of their own gods?

*Hen.* He thought that some of their gods were bad enough, but nothing like so wicked as our god. But blessed be the Lord, Sancho has been better taught since then. He now knows that "God is love."

*Loveg.* Yes Mr. Henry, that is the part of the story we want to hear, viz. how poor Sancho came by the knowledge of the Gospel.

*Hen.* For some time after poor Sancho was sold, he had reason to groan under his bondage; and all that time he was kept in sad ignorance: but afterward he had masters who were much more humane; and they encouraged the preaching of the gospel on their plantations: but still Sancho kept up his prejudice against the Christian's God. The first thing which forcibly struck him, was the meek and humble deportment of two Christian slaves, a man and his wife, during a hurricane that was in those parts some years ago, and which was fatal to the lives of many. He wondered to hear them talk about their dear loving Savior all the time their poor cots were blowing about their ears, and their lives in continual danger; nor could he make it out, while he was trembling and quaking under the apprehensions of death, notwithstanding he had met with so many things to sicken him of life, to hear them rejoicing and singing. One little hymn they sung over so often, that Sancho well remembered the words.

While thunders and tempests are rolling above,  
I trust in my Savior, and rest on his love:  
The thunders of vengeance shall never annoy  
The peaceable rest which in Christ I enjoy.

My bleeding Redeemer I claim as my rock,  
Who carefully screens the poor lambs of the flock;  
I trust on his mercy, and live on his grace,  
And under his cross is my sweet dwelling place.

While Jesus sits smiling above the black cloud,  
 I'll sing to his praises Hosannas aloud;  
 For soon will he take me to regions above,  
 To bask in his presence, and feast on his love.

Then here, my Redeemer, I'll sit at thy feet;  
 Should death overtake me, I humbly submit,  
 Then come the bless'd moment in which I'm to die,  
 For Jesus hath lov'd me, I cannot say why.

Then the poor man would cry in their broken language, 'O my dear wifey! you and I cast ourselves on de dear Savior, for "he careth for us." O! what a loving Savior he is to care for such poor sinful human creatures as we are.' Then when another tremendous clap of thunder 'was intermixing itself in the storm, he would cry,

And when thy loud thunders are rolling above,  
 We'll trust in thy mercy, and feast on thy love,  
 For thou hast redeem'd us by shedding thy blood,  
 All hail Holy Savior, our Lord and our God.

Then again he would say; "Our most dear Savior is 'a hiding place from de storm, and a covert from 'de tempest, and de shadow of a great rock in a 'weary land.' De storm cannot hurt us if it should kill us, for den we should go to de dear Savior, who has been so loving and good to our sinful hearts." Such was the substance of the conversation and behavior, so far as Sancho recollects it, of these poor creatures during the hurricane; and which was quite new to him, having never seen till then, any thing like the holy patience which belongs to the real Christian.

*Loveg.* I should suppose from this circumstance, Sancho began to have a more favorable opinion of the Christian's God.

*Hen.* Sancho from that time began to have an idea that the Christians had two gods; a very dreadful bad god, and a very merciful and good God.

*Wor.* Why really Sancho was not far short of the

mark; the god of this world is quite as bad a god as Sancho could suppose him to be; but I hope, after this he soon got acquainted with the good God; for I am sure he had suffered enough from the bad god.

*Hen.* For a time the poor creature said "He was afraid to serve de good God, because he appeared so much more weak dan de bad god. He observed, dat he never heard of de great *buckra* men, or any of deir rich masseys serving de good God, but laughed at all dat did; and dat dey did not like to serve de good God, because he would not allow dem to get rich by stealing and cruelty; nor to be angry and spiteful, nor to live in drunkenness and lewdness."

*Wor.* Poor Sancho's discovery however, that there was a good God, as well as a bad one, might have been of considerable use to his mind, and doubtless led him to enquire further after the truth.

*Loveg.* Why really he appeared to know more of the truth, even in that state, than many among us. I am positive that Sancho's conceptions of the nature of God, were more consistent than what is too generally admitted among ourselves. What loose notions are to be found among many who believe in the unity of the divine existence;\* as if an allowance of sin could be found in the same holy being, who from the infinite perfection of his nature, cannot but eternally abhor it.

*Mrs. Loveg.* But I hope Mr. Henry, you will let us hear the rest of Sancho's experience. The bells will ring for Church in about half an hour, and my husband loves a little retirement before he begins the service.

*Hen.* I have already observed, that Sancho's task

\* The Socinians are very fond of claiming to themselves the title of Unitarians, as if they alone believed in the unity of the Divine Essence. Can this arise from Ignorance? They know we no more believe in the existence of three Gods, than themselves.

masters began to be much less rigid and severe : and it therefore became more the custom to encourage marriage on the plantation on which Sancho labored. Against this however, he always had an objection, lest he should have an offspring to be made as miserable as himself ; but as he found his own situation much altering for the better, he began to turn his thoughts that way ; but still he determined, if ever he did marry, to unite himself to one who served the good God, as he conceived he should be much happier with her than another. He accordingly paid his addresses to two or three young female slaves, while all of them were in one tone : “ Me no have you, me no be your wifey, you no love our dear Savior, and den we sha’n’t know how to love one another.” All these refusals made Sancho more anxious to make further enquiries about the dear Savior, and this was the first thing that induced him to go into the chapels, belonging to those good people, called Moravians.

*Loveg.* It appears that this poor artless man, had some secret drawings in his mind after good ; but that as yet he did not know where it was to be found. I am sure, wherever there is a conviction of that which is wrong, and a holy desire to be right, such persons are not far from the kingdom of heaven.

*Hen.* So it appeared with Sancho. For as soon as he began to hear the praying, singing, and preaching of these good people, his eyes were at once fastened on them, and his heart was soon brought to receive the gospel. Oh ! it was his delight to tell how his soul was won over to the blessed service of God, by hearing of the glad tidings of salvation.

*Mrs. Loveg.* And I hope it will be as delightful to us to hear of it : do make haste Mr. Henry, and tell us more of it before we go to Church.

*Hen.* Oh madam ! it was very pleasant to hear with what sweet surprize he was led to attend on their ministry. He was first, not a little astonished and softened by their singing, when it came into his mind, how different it was from the mad bellowings, roar-



ings, and screamings which are to be found among the wretched slaves of sin; and when compared to the execrable shouts of triumph made among those cruel tormentors of the human race, who brought him from Africa.

*Far.* Ah! Henry my child, you can now speak from experience. Neither you nor I knew any thing of happiness, till we were blessed with the grace of God upon our hearts; and now God has loved us, my dear child, how sweetly we love one another! [Farmer much affected.]

*Hen.* Yes, blessed be God father, that we now know what it is to love one another, since Christ hath loved us: O! what a blessing it is to have that kingdom of God established in our hearts; which is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

*Loveg.* None can tell the happiness they enjoy who are blessed with "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and which keeps the heart and mind through Jesus Christ."---But if Sancho was so affected under the singing, how did his mind feel under the sermon?

*Hen.* I was going to tell you Sir. The minister was, it seems, then preaching upon that text, "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." O! how Sancho delighted to tell of the effects of that sermon on his heart.

*Wor.* Can you give us the particulars Mr. Henry?

*Hen.* Why Sir, he told me, that the Minister introduced his sermon by remarking, what a deal of pains was taken in the plantation to destroy the *borers* that were so injurious to the sugar canes; and he supposed, that no merciful planter could ever wantonly wish to kill these poor insects, while each of them might probably feel as much as though a giant died, provided he could but instruct them not to injure him any more. Then he asked the question, if there was a planter so kind and wise, as to contrive a plan to

instruct them better, as what they did was the cause of their own destruction? Then he observed, that before any planter was capable of instructing these poor borers, of his good will towards them, he must become a borer himself. Then he cried, "O the wisdom and mercy of God our Savior towards our unmerciful and depraved race, for that we on earth were no more in the sight of God, than these little insects are in our sight. Yet that he might prove his mercy towards us, and that he might make known the riches of his love, he appeared as one of our own race, and suffered in our stead, all that we deserved from the justice of his holy Father, for transgressing against his good and righteous law. This simple, yet beautiful display of the love of God towards man, so affected poor Sancho, that he scarcely knew the ground he trod upon; and methinks I see him now, just as I then saw him while relating this part of his story, with his eyes lifted up, each of them filled with a floating tear of gratitude and joy, and then crying in ther broken language,

Let all de world fall down and know,  
*Dat* none but God such love could show.

*Loveg.* What a mercy it is, that the Lord has inclined the hearts of these good people to labour with so much disinterestedness and holy zeal, to bring these abject sinners to the knowledge of the gospel! But I dare say, Sancho had somewhat further to say of the particular effect the sermon had upon his heart.

*Hen.* He next told me, as he expressed himself, "that when all de *broders* and sisters *dat* stood near him, saw *dat* our dear Savior was breaking his heart," they all began to smile and weep for joy; and after the service was over they came round him like a swarm of boes; saying one after another, "O my dear *broder*, how glad we are *dat* hearing of de death and sufferings of our dear Savior, has made you feel

de grace of a broken heart. Now *broder*, he will make you happy, and he will come and live in your heart while you lie at his cross. O how welcome is de poor sinner to de loving Savior." He afterwards told me, that he was soon persuaded to visit the good man he had heard preach; and when poor Sancho began telling him what a wicked heart he now found he had, he was a little surprised to hear him say, all that was very good: and when he began to complain still deeper, he was yet more surprised when he said, that was better still; and when he further told him that he was so very wicked, that he must be ruined for ever, if our blessed Savior would not save him as the chief of sinners, he was quite astonished when the Minister joined in saying, "O my dear *broder*, that is best of all; how glad I am that you have received the grace to know your great need of the blood-shedding, and atonement of our blessed Lord." Soon after this, Sancho beginning to find the conflict within himself, common to all Christians, came and told the Minister of a discovery he had made, that he had two souls, a good one, and a very bad one; the Minister explained to him from whence his mistake arose, and that he had not two souls, but two very different principles in one and the same soul. Upon a further discovery of the truths of the gospel, Sancho however quickly found himself a much happier man than ever he had been before; he walked in the love and fear of the Lord, and was soon baptized, and admitted to communion among these good people. And after that, was married to one of the women, who would have nothing to do with him because he did not then love de dear Savior.

*Loveq.* Why these good people have a dialect peculiar to themselves! but notwithstanding some peculiarities of expression, they are most affectionately and warmly attached to the essential truths of the gospel; and I am sure, wherever that is the case, mere modes of expression are of very little consequence; they have set an example to all the world in

their zeal for the salvation of sinners, which never can be sufficiently admired.

*Far.* Henry my child, I wish you could have brought Sancho and his family with you. How delighted I should have been to have had them all to work at our farm. I dare say we could have done very well by them, for Christians love to be diligent.

*Hen.* Ah father! you don't understand matters. A slave in those parts is as much his master's property, as your hogs and stock of cattle are a part of your property.

*Far.* The more's the pity my child, a thousand and a thousand times over.

[The bells striking up for Church, Mr. Lovegood retires to his study; the Farmer, Henry, and Mr. Worthy, take the opportunity to walk out to see if there could be any thing done for poor Prettyface; and thus ends the dialogue on the Slave Trade.]

## DIALOGUE XVI.

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A WHISPER FROM BEHIND THE DOOR; OR THE SECRETS OF PRIVATE SCANDAL AND MISREPRESENTATION MADE PUBLIC: WHEREIN ALSO THE ABSURDITY AND PROFANENESS OF THE SOCINIAN SYSTEM IS UNMASKED.

**S**OON after the foregoing events, a winter's evening conversation took place over a dish of tea and a game of cards, at old Madam TOOGOOD'S, of Lower Brookfield, (mentioned in Dialogue III. who lived on an Annuity of 150*l.* a year): between the good old Lady, the Rev. Mr. SPITEFUL, Master of the Free Grammar School, in Envy-lane, Mapleton, who had whipped away all his Scholars but one or two, that he might live at his leisure, and still enjoy the profits of the endowment, availing himself of other advantages by his occasional services among the neighbouring clergy; Mr. WISEHEAD, a Bookseller in the same town, a strict attendant on Mr. DRONISH, and his assistant the Rev. Mr. SMIRKING; Mr. CONSIDERATE, one of the Aldermen of Mapleton, who possessed a few houses in the town, and a small freehold in the neighbourhood, and who had lately given more regular attendance on Mr. Lovegood, with his wife and daughter, who had been constant attendants some time before; Miss PRATEAPACE, a young woman, who was an Apothecary's daughter, one of Madam Toogood's God-daughters, and an apprentice of Madam Flirt's the Milliner; and Miss POLLY LITTLEWORTH.



Miss PATTY was also expected, but being washing week, both the young *Ladies* could not attend.

The conversation was thus introduced. Miss Polly comes in all in a bustle.

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*Miss Polly.* I am *perdigiously* sorry, Ladies and Gentlemen, if I have made you wait, but my mother wanted me to call at Mr. Traffick's, of the shop, as I was coming this way, for some grocery and other shop goods. I protest I have walked so fast, that I am all in a state of *prosperation*---[The tea is called for and introduced.]

*Spitef.* I wonder that every body should be running to that shop, to support such a schismatical enthusiast, as though there were no other shops but his. I would turn my servant away, if he should dare to go there for a *hap'worth* of sand.

*Wiseh.* I do not mean to displease you Sir; by observing that such sort of illiberal expressions are ill becoming a Gentleman of a liberal education. Surely a man is not a schismatic because he cannot conform to the rules of your national Church.

*Spitef.* Why is not ours the true established Church?

*Wiseh.* I dare say you think so Sir, but it should be remembered that when yours is but a new dissenting Church from the old established Church of Rome, and that by such a dissent, you by no means admit her boasted infallibility; there can be no great criminality if others chuse to take a step further from your establishment:\* we cannot all think exactly

If this proves the absurdity of the violent high church man, it is no argument against the Church itself. See Dialogue vii. p.

alike. Besides Sir, how can you call Mr. Traffic a schismatic now? for he has left our meeting some time since, though he and his family were always brought up among us, and regularly attends at Brookfield Church.

*Spitef.* Worse and worse. What business has he, and a thousand more such run-about fellows, to leave their own proper Parish Churches where they ought to attend; for immediately as Lovegood is removed, all the mob that follows him will be off to different *conventicles*, if they have not one of the same sort to preach what these canting hypocrites chuse to call the gospel.

*Consid.* Now really Sir, we get no good by such vehemence, for I verily conceive, no human laws have a right to force any one to worship contrary to their consciences. Nor can I suppose that Mr. Lovegood is to be blamed for filling his own Church, if no fault is to be found with others for emptying theirs: and as to Mr. Traffic, if a man acts conscientiously in his business, I don't see what we have to do with his religion, and I believe it is admitted on all hands, that he is very just and true in all his dealings.

*Miss Polly.* Sir, my father insists upon it, that we must all run *galloping* to that shop. I hardly think he would let our Sam wear livery if he did not send there for all the trimmings: and when I was there, to be sure how he *held forth* behind the counter, as though he had been in a pulpit, about the miraculous conversion of my brother, as he called it. I am sure of late, we are quite *suffocated*\* with religion in our house.

*Spitef.* Yes, *conversion* is a mighty word with them; for it seems that not only such men as your brother, who was once so wild, and is now become so *sanctified*, but every one who steps a little aside from their strict notions of religion, they suppose to be no

\* Miss Polly probably meant *surfeited*.

better than heathens, and they must all be converted or be damned. Mr. Wisehead you are a man of reading, and I dare say, you admit the justice of my remark against these enthusiasts.

*Wiseh.* Why Sir, if you can talk with more prudence and moderation upon these subjects, I shall have no objection to answer you. In my opinion, however, it is very injudicious to bring forward the words, conversion and regeneration, as though they could be in any sense applicable among *us Christians* in the present day. They were only designed for primitive times, when people were brought over from being Jews or Pagans, to be of the Christian religion: but how can any of us be converted to a religion, to which we are converted already.

*Consid.* What then Sir, do you think that Henry Littleworth was a Christian, when he and his comrades kept our Town in a perpetual uproar; and when one evening they got from your barber, one of your old wigs, and put it on an ass's head, and then drove him down the Town, and into your shop, saying the ass was come to sup with his brother, Mr. Wisehead?

*Wiseh.* Certainly Sir, these were very unwise and irrational steps in that giddy youth; notwithstanding, it would be the highest reflection upon the Supreme Being, to suppose we have not within ourselves, from the principles of *natural religion*, sufficient powers to reform ourselves from our vicious courses when we like; for what purpose has the Almighty given to every man both reason and conscience, if these were not adequate to the reformation of mankind?

*Consid.* Why really Sir, I can't see what great matters reason has ever done in the reformation of mankind; she seems to stand aside, and let nine-tenths act by mere passion and appetite: and as for conscience, I am sure, among thousands, that acts like an unfaithful and intoxicated watchman, without either eyes or brains. I believe that my wife's Minister is quite right in his doctrine, that all the facul-

ties of the human mind are exceedingly vitiated and depraved; and till God mends reason and conscience, they will never mend us. But pray Sir, did you ever meet with any of these rational converts in any of your travels? and is it not very strange that your Doctor should have to bestow so many of his rational lectures to a set of almost empty pews?

*Wiseh.* We cannot account for such extraordinary events; but still we believe, if we could make the common people more rational, we should be better attended. But still, if mankind are vicious, it is their own fault; for we *may* be all good if we *will*.

*Consid.* Certainly so. [To Mrs. Toogood.] See madam, how your cat is a licking and cleaning herself all over.

*Madam Toog.* Oh Sir! she is a lovely delicate creature.

*Consid.* [To Mr. Wisehead.]---Then I suppose the cat has a *will* to be clean, and she proves the point, she may be clean if she *will*. [To Miss Polly.] Now Miss Polly Littleworth, did you ever see any of your father's hogs sit upright, and wash and clean themselves with their fore feet like that cat? and however awkwardly they might do it, yet they certainly *may* if they *will*; but alas, they want the will.

*Spitef.* Well, such a thought, had I lived a thousand years, would never have entered my brains; but pray, are we to be compared to hogs and cats?

*Consid.* Why in the Bible, men have been compared to brutes before now: to lions, bears, tigers, or leopards, wolves, foxes, and dogs, and to birds also, not less ravenous than such sort of beasts, to eagles, vultures, ravens, and others; yes, and to the worst of reptiles, to vipers themselves. But I only ask, if there ever was found that creature, either among men or brutes, that could *will* contrary to his inclination or disposition; What then can we mean by saying, we may all be good if we *will*? who in their senses ever denied it? Just so bad men *will* be bad, and good men *will* be good. Is not every

one's will regulated by his disposition! Such however is the glib nonsense of the day.

*Wiseh.* I hope Sir, you do not think, that we *rational* dissenters talk nonsense; but according to your notions, (and I would not wish to misunderstand you, as I believe you have a *good heart*, and mean well,) man is a mere machine---and there is an end to all distinction between virtue and vice in man, if we are *obliged* to act according to our dispositions, and have *no power* to correct them.

*Madam Toog.* Oh! shocking, shocking, Mr. Considerate, I never thought you could believe in such bad notions of religion. I am very sorry to hear that of late you have been such a strict follower of Love-good. I am sure he preaches very wicked doctrines; and if none of us are to be rewarded for the practice of our morality, I don't see why we should give ourselves so much *trouble* about it.

*Spitef.* Yes madam, and such are the tenets held forth at Brookfield Church. I suppose that Atheism will be preached there next.

*Consid.* Now I beg Sir, you would be a little more dispassionate and give me a calm answer to the following question: Supposing you should ask any of the wild sparks in our Town the reason why they gave way to such courses, what do you think would be their answer? Why, that they were *overpowered* by temptation and inclination, before they submitted to such ways.

*Spitef.* I suppose they might Sir; but what of that?

*Consid.* Then it seems they wanted strength or power to resist, and that reason and conscience did them no good, and that they were conquered by the wicked inclinations and corruptions of their hearts.

*Spitef.* But if you make it out that these people acted *against their wills* in what they did, I can see no harm in any of their wicked tricks.

*Consid.* Stop Sir, you go on too fast: did I suppose that they acted *against* their wills, when



they acted *according* to their inclinations? Is not every man's will and inclination virtually the same? And are not all people, with bad inclinations, *wilfully* wicked, while others with good inclinations are *willingly* pious? I think Mr. Wisehead, the will is nothing but the servant of the understanding and inclinations.

*Wiseh.* [Giving his forehead, a grave and judicious scratch.] Really Sir, your question is so intricate and important, I would rather take some time to consider that point. Before I venture upon an answer, I should like to talk to our Ministers. The Doctor and Mr. Smirking, I'll assure you Sir, are very *rational* and able divines; and as you are in the habit of calling at our shop to read the news, in a day or two hence I hope I shall be able to give you a satisfactory answer; and then Sir, we can step into our back parlour, and have a few words further on this subject.

*Spitef.* [All in a hurry.] Why, where is the difficulty of answering that question? What has the understanding or the inclination to do with the will? Have we not all a free will to act as we like best? Had not I a free will to come here, and must I not have a free will to go home again?

*Consid.* Pray Sir, have you a free will to throw yourself into the fire, or jump into the water, or to go to Brookfield Church next Sunday?

*Spitef.* How can a man have a free will to do those things which he naturally hates?

*Consid.* Why then, having no inclination to throw yourself into the fire or water, or to go to Brookfield Church, there would be no getting you to do these things but by force. Now I always thought with you, ever since I have considered this point, that every man's will must be free to follow his inclinations and dispositions; and that is the reason why the world lives so wickedly, because they like it best. And I think if you had attended a little more to the feelings of your own mind, and the minds of others, you

would have found it out, that all people act according to their inclinations and dispositions, whether good or bad; and that the understanding debates according to the object set before it: next comes the choice, and the will at last determines to pursue the object that is *suggested* by the inclinations, *digested* by the understanding, and *preferred* by the choice: [to Miss Polly,] and I dare say Miss Polly, if your worthy father was one of the party, he would at once see that all this talk about free will, was but *putting the cart before the horse*: for of this I am persuaded, we never act but, as we are acted upon, and that good or evil are the result of all actions, according to the habit of the mind.

*Spitef.* Then we are all like pumps or wheelbarrows, and not rational creatures. I am for *rational religion* with Mr. Wisehead.

*Consid.* And so am I too Sir; but though rational creatures make machines, yet there is no rationality in the machine itself. Now I believe every man exercises his reason according to his nature and disposition; and when I suppose the pure and holy word of God is proposed to the choice of all, they who reject it do it with the utmost freedom of the will, because they dislike it; and that all good men have exactly the same freedom of will in the choice of good; "for if the Son shall make us free, then we are free indeed;" and when we are commanded "to work out our salvation with fear and trembling," that we may properly work at all, we are told, "it is God that worketh in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure," and that we are made "his willing people in the day of his power." So that instead of being an enemy to *rational religion*, I cannot see how there can be any religion that is not *rational*.

*Spitef.* Where Sir, in the name of wonder, did you get all these cramp expressions from?

*Consid.* Why Sir, from a book I am ashamed I have paid so little attention to, till of late,---the Bible: and while you and Mr. Wisehead are attempt-

ing to explain away all those fine strong expressions of "conversion, regeneration, a new creation," and the like; I have of late seen that a peculiar wisdom and glory belongs to them; and that it is no unmeaning abstruse metaphor, but a plain downright matter of fact; that "except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

*Spitef.* I always thought it would come to this, since you have lately taken to follow your wife and daughter to Brookfield Church: it seems to me as if all the people were running mad together.

*Consid.* I acknowledge I had my secret prejudices, against my wife and daughter, when they first began to go to Brookfield church, yet I cannot tell why; but I was satisfied, anger and opposition could answer no good end whatever. And when they requested that Mr. Lovegood might give us a visit at our house, soon after our great family trial,\* I confess I was not a little struck with his tender and sympathetic behavior. And though I took an opportunity to dispute every inch of ground, which I thought (from mere prejudice) I could maintain; yet such was the force of truth, and such was the tender, gentlemanly, and affectionate way in which he treated me, while I rather had a design to expose him, by holding him at arm's length before my wife and daughter, that I found myself entirely disarmed; and from that time I determined to go and hear him more constantly; for I discovered him to be a man of uncommonly good understanding, and of a truly Christian spirit.

*Spitef.* And thus Sir, you have told us how you have been seduced from your regular attendance at your parish Church, by one of these artful modern reformers. Hang them all! They will be the ruin both of our Church and State.

*Madam Toog.* Ladies and gentlemen, is your tea sweet enough?

\* See Dialogue XXIX.

*Consid.* Quite so, I thank you madam; but I think a few lumps more of sugar in Mr. Spiteful's tea would not be amiss, for there seems to be somewhat very *bitter* upon his palate, that wants *sweetening*.

*Madam Toog.* Why Mr. Spiteful has at times complained that sugar is apt to turn *sour* on his stomach.

*Consid.* To be *sour* as well as *bitter* at the same time, must be a terrible calamity. Would it be amiss, Mr. Spiteful, if you were to come with us next Sunday to Brookfield church for some of Mr. Lovegood's *elixir*? he has an excellent receipt to cure *sour* stomachs and *bitter* palates. I have known many people that have been diseased in the same way, who were afterwards restored by attending at that Church. Pray Sir, do any of the Doctors in your way perform such cures?

*Spitef.* Upon my word Sir, I shan't put up with all this banter. I beg you would be less free with your skits and jokes. What is it to you what cures we perform?

*Consid.* Why it verily appears to me that they are the best Doctors who cure the most patients, and they are the best preachers that do the most good.

*Wiseh.* Really Mr. Spiteful, in my opinion, Mr. Considerate has quite as much reason to be displeased with you, for your disrespectful speeches against his friend Mr. Lovegood, as you have to be displeased with him for a few innocent humorous turns. I believe Mr. Lovegood in his way, may be a good man; notwithstanding his notions in religion, are so widely different from ours. We should be better able to carry our point, if you could deliver your sentiments with less heat, and more deliberation.

*Spitef.* How can I help it? What is no allowance to be made for a man's disposition?

*Consid.* I thought you said a little time ago, we may do what we will, notwithstanding our dispositions or inclinations. Pray Sir, which side of the

question do you mean to take after all---that men *may will, if they will*, contrary to their dispositions and inclinations; or, that as we are disposed and inclined, so we *will and act*?

*Spitef.* Really Sir, I wish you would drop these abstruse metaphysical discussions. I came here for a little innocent chat, and not to enter into a debate upon such a curious subject as this.

*Consid.* With all my heart Sir; but then it is to be hoped we are not all to be called fools and madmen, because we suppose it necessary for a man to have the grace of God in his heart, so that our evil dispositions may be rooted out, and that we may feel ourselves inclined or made willing to obey. I don't think we pray like enthusiasts, when we pray to the Lord after each command, in our church service, that he would "incline our hearts to keep his law."

*Miss Polly.* Well, I declare I don't think I should have come here this evening if I had thought I was to hear nothing but this talk about religion; I think what we have of it at Church once a week, is quite enough. I was in hopes we were to have had a little harmless chat, and a game of cards.

*Spitef.* I dare say Mr. Considerate has lately got so *sanctified*, that he would not touch a card for all the world.

*Consid.* Why truly Sir, I cannot find what good we get by such sort of amusements, that are only calculated to tempt us to *kill* time, when we are directed to *redeem* it; and how far we can, or cannot have "our conversation always for the use of edifying, that it may administer grace to the hearers," while we are so engaged, I suppose is easy to be determined.

*Spitef.* What then, are we to be always *saying our prayers*, and talking about religion, and are we to have no innocent recreations?

*Consid.* Yes Sir, you know I am fond of a garden, and I have this day been recreating myself by pruning and training a peach tree; and I felt it all the



time entirely an innocent recreation: but I always found these games of hazard and chance, were unhappily calculated to excite a spirit of emulation and gambling, which have a tendency to promote the worst of tempers; and though some may play with as much comparative innocency, as I felt in pruning a fruit tree, yet there is a certain bewitchery belonging to these sort of games, which renders them at all times very dangerous in themselves, and injurious in their consequences.

*Madam Toog.* Oh Mr. Considerate, this is going too far. I really cannot see that we need be quite so strict, I love an innocent game at cards as well as any body; but then I always give my winnings to the poor; but I am very sorry I must not be one of the party to-night, as it happens to be the week before sacrament, and then I never touch a card. Thank the Almighty, I never neglect my duty.

*Miss Prateap.* Well well, I dare say ma'am, you don't think it necessary that we young folks should wear old heads on our shoulders. I am for being neither saint nor sinner. You know ma'am, my mother was a clergyman's daughter, and if the clergy cannot tell what is right, I don't know who should; and she never brought us up with such strict notions of religion. I see no harm in a game of cards, and a little cheerful chit-chat; *God-a-mighty never gave us our tongues for nothing.*

*Madam Toog.* Yes my dear, I am quite of your way of thinking; but then while we are using our tongues in a way of harmless chat, we should not neglect upon proper occasions, to use them for the purposes of our religion, in doing our duty, and *saying our prayers*; and I hope, you'll take your god-mother's advice, till after you are confirmed; and properly prepare yourself for that, before the bishop comes round next time; though I think if you had minded your duty, you would have attended when he was here the last summer.

*Miss Prateap.* Why I hope it will not be neces-

sary to submit to all this *trouble* for the salvation of my soul, while I am so young. I had rather stop till I am a deal older: though I am sure I am as religious as Miss Fanny Dolittle, who was confirmed two years ago.

*Miss Polly.* We *never* had *no* such talk and trouble about religion, till after Lovegood came into those parts, and now we have nothing else morning, noon, and night. I hope madam, you don't think it necessary that we should trouble ourselves about religion, while we are so young?

*Madam Toog.* O no, Miss, we must make some allowance for youth: when I was a *lass*, I confess I did not think it necessary to *take to religion so strictly* as I have done of late. I know that it requires a deal of resolution to submit to "the trials, and troubles, and discipline of a virtuous life."\*

*Consid.* Why my wife and daughter have for above these four years, *trudged* away to Mr. Lovegood's almost all weathers, and it is a long walk there and back again; and when I used to tell her the *trouble* she took, till I found it was a pleasure to go with her myself, her answer was, his "yoke is easy, and his burden light;" and that "his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are paths of peace."

*Madam Toog.* O Sir! but I love to *mortify myself* in my religion.

*Consid.* Well, I am sure my wife does not mortify herself in her religion; for she is always as happy as she well can be, whenever she has a journey to Brookfield.---Pray Madam, do you *mortify yourself* when you are honest, just, or sober, or when you tell the truth?

*Madam Toog.* O no Sir! I hope I know my duty better than all that.

\* This expression, in its original form, is to be found in the writings of Dr. Priestley; so that all the absurdities deducible from it, are not to be charged on the old Lady, but on the Doctor, the oracle of the *rational* Dissenters of the day.

*Consid.* Why then Madam, how is it that you mortify yourself when you serve God?

*Spitef.* Don't answer him, Ma'am.---I perceive he is upon the catch. If I had a wife and daughter who ran about at this rate, neglecting their duty at home, I would sooner break their legs than suffer it.

*Consid.* Why Sir, my wife never neglected her duty at home; a good wife she was before she went to Brookfield church, and a better ever since.

*Miss Polly.* Well, well, I see we shall have no cards if we are to talk about religion after this fashion. If you Mrs. Toogood, and Mr. Considerate, don't like to play, I can't see why the rest of us mayn't sit down to a game at whist, for we have all done tea.

*Madam Toog.* Becky Prateapace my dear, will you ring the bell, that Nelly may take away the tea things and bring the cards. The pack which was bought for Mr. Archdeacon Smoothtongue will do---they have been used but once.

*Miss Prateap.* That I will Madam, with all my heart; and I'll have Mr. Wishead for my partner, and you shall play with Mr. Spiteful Miss Polly.

*Miss Polly.* I don't care who I play with, provided I may but have a game at cards.

[The cards are consequently introduced, the parties settle to the work, while the old lady and Mr. Considerate hold a *tete-a-tete* at one corner of the room. The reader would be little entertained at the idle frivolous conversation of the card table, the substance of which was from the fertile genius of Mr. Spiteful, who continued his occasional invectives, especially between the deals, against modern seducers, sectaries and enthusiasts; and among other things was running them down for their pretended pharisaic sanctity, for doing so much more than their neighbours. This Mr. Considerate overhearing, asked Mr. Spiteful how many scholars he had left at his free grammar school? and what he had year by

MISS POLLY, MISS PRATEAPACE, MR. SPITEFUL, AND  
MR. WISEHEAD, PLAYING AT CARDS.



"The cards are introduced.—The reader would be little entertained at the idle, frivolous conversation of the card table: the substance of which was from the fertile genius of Mr. Spiteful, who continued his occasional invectives (especially between the deals) against modern seducers, sectaries, and enthusiasts."





year for the slight attendance he gave to two or three children, just by way of keeping up the name of a school? and whether it was not as great a crime for some to do too little, as for others to do too much? and whether it would be consistent to charge an honest hard working day laborer with such crimes, because he would do three times the work of an idle careless fellow, who scarcely would do any work at all? or whether lawyers and physicians were ever blamed, for being too attentive to their clients and patients? and consequently if Ministers could be too diligent and attentive in their office, when the salvation of the souls of their hearers was at stake! This so irritated Mr. Spiteful that it threw him off his guard, and rendered him quite inattentive, when Miss Polly, as his partner, had also to lecture him for his negligence, declaring she had lost eighteen pence by him already, while the grave Mr. Wisehead was profiting by his folly; declaring she would play with him no more, unless he would mind his cards. Mr. Considerate joined with them, that there might be no more quarrelling, there had better be no more playing. The hint was accordingly taken; and as Miss Polly said she was quite out of luck, the cards were cleared away. The two misses, and the old lady retired to one corner of the room, for a little cheap talk in their way, and in the next Dialogue, the concluding part of the conversation will be presented to the reader.]

## DIALOGUE XVII

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CONTAINING THE SECOND PART OF THE SAME CONVERSATION, WHICH WAS THUS INTRODUCED BY MR. CONSIDERATE.

*Consid.* I SHOULD be glad to know, if any further dispute should arise between us; how far we are to settle the controversy by the Bible: for I suspect your notions of the Bible are very loose---at least as I suppose.

*Wiseh.* Just so far Sir, as it is consonant with *reason*, and no further; I never can believe that which contradicts my reason.

*Consid.* Indeed Sir, if this be the case, we are likely to be terribly misguided: while reason, among our ignorant and benighted race, appears to be so much under the influence of prejudice and passion. If twenty men of different persuasions be called together, however flatly they may contradict each other, they would all tell you they are *guided by reason*.

*Spitef.* Well Sir, for all that, I am quite of Mr. Wisehead's opinion, that we have no business with the Bible, when it flatly contradicts our reason; though in all points we may not understand it. It would surely be a fine thing, if we were to believe what we cannot comprehend, or else *go to hell and be damned*.

*Consid.* Why then Sir, am I so to understand you and Mr. Wisehead, as to suppose you are Atheists, for you cannot comprehend the incomprehensible

attributes of God; or that you do not believe your own existence, because you cannot understand the nature of that existence? If you and Mr. Wisehead, are only to believe the Bible so far as you can comprehend it; that book, in your opinion, is nothing better than a mere history of uncertain events; and then, notwithstanding revelation, we have nothing left us but to guess at religion as well as we can: and what sort of guesswork this has proved, even among the most cultivated of the heathen nations, is evident enough.

*Wiseh.* Sir, I believe the book, which we generally call the Bible, is but little more than the works of good men, subject to the same infirmities with ourselves: who, though they might have written according to the best of their judgments, were still frequently warped by their national prejudices, in favor of their own religion.\*

*Consid.* Indeed gentlemen, if the word *conversion* should be inapplicable to young Mr. Henry Littleworth, yet it cannot be unsuitable to either of you; for Jews and Pagans believe a part of the Bible as well as yourselves, while neither you nor they, give any more credit to it, as *the Book of Revelation*, than I do to the *History of Robinson Crusoe*.

*Spitef.* Why really Mr. Wisehead, I begin to be afraid we are going rather too far; this is making out the Bible to be but little better than an old, ill-written ecclesiastical history. Though I don't at all approve of Lovegood's notions the more for that.

*Wiseh.* Indeed Sir, if you wish to know more correctly "my opinion, what a Christian is bound to believe, with respect to the Scriptures; I am not afraid to answer, that the books, which are universally received as authentic, are to be considered as faithful records of past transactions."---"No Christian is answerable for more than this, the writers of the books of Scripture were *men*, and therefore *fallible*: but all

\* See Priestley and other Socinian writers, *passim*.

that we have to do with them, is in the character of *historians* and *witnesses* of what they heard and saw; of course, their credibility is to be estimated like that of other historians, viz. from the circumstances under which they wrote, as with respect to their opportunities of knowing the truth of what they relate, and the biasses to which they might be subject. Like all other historians, they are liable to mistakes, with respect to things of small moment, because *they might not give sufficient attention to them*; and with respect to their *reasonings*, we are *fully* at liberty to judge of them as well as those of other men, by a due consideration of the propositions they advance, and the arguments they alledge."---"And if such men have even communications with the Deity, it by no means follows that they are in other respects, more wise and knowing than other men."\* This point, I suppose to be proved by the *lame account*† Moses has given of the creation and fall of man, having not the means of exact information; so that to suppose, that "the books of Scripture were written by particular divine inspiration, is a thing to which the writers themselves make no pretensions: it is a notion destitute of all proof, and that has done great injury to the evidence of Christianity."‡ As to Paul's Epistles therefore, and the other Epistles, I never can admit that the authors of them were immediately inspired for the purpose of writing them: and many of our *rational* divines have thought them in many instances unintelligible, and absurd.

*Consid.* Well Sir, this is speaking out with a witness. I don't think one Deist in ten, would have spoken more decidedly against the Scriptures. Pray Sir, if such be your judgment on the Epistles, what are we to think of the Gospels?

\* See Priestley's Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever, Part II. Pref. p. xiii. and Let. V.

† Priestley.

‡ Priestley's Letters, p. 53.

*Wiseh.* O Sir! I have no doubt but all the four evangelists, as they are called, were very honest men, and that they wrote the "history of Jesus" according to the best of their judgment; though we suspect their genuine histories have been intermixed with many interpolations: and it appears, that "some texts of the Old Testament have been *improperly* quoted by writers of the New,\* who it seems were sometimes "misled by Jewish prejudices.\*" Surely therefore, it must be owned, that "some obscurity is left in the Scriptures themselves, which might *mislead* readers, full of Heathen prejudices, and so left it should seem, to whet human industry and the spirit of inquiry; †" and "the Bereans are commended for not taking the word even of an apostle, but *examining* the Scriptures *for themselves*; whether the doctrine which they heard was true, and *whether St. Paul's reasoning was just.* ‡" Such Sir, are the sentiments of all the great divines of our denomination who have written on this subject,

*Consid.* Are we then to suppose, that the Bereans searched the Old Testament Scriptures under any other idea, but that their decisions were definitive? I should have thought that when they searched the Scriptures, it was not with a design to examine whether they were right, or wrong, but rather that they referred to them, as to an infallible guide. If they had only to look into the *lame account* Moses has given of matters, I do not know that any thing but confusion could be the result of their diligence.

*Wiseh.* Well well Sir, I cannot give up the point: we must be guided by our own reason, as it respects revelation.

*Consid.* Allow me then Sir, to ask you this plain

\* Theological Repository. See Fuller's Systems, p. 238.

† Lindsey's Apology, ch. 2.

‡ Belsham's Sermon on the Importance of Truth, p. 39.



question, If we are to be guided alone by our reason, while we are at liberty to doubt every word of Revelation; are we to call this Infidelity, or Christianity? or is not downright Deism, far more rational and consistent than such sort of Christianity?

*Wiseh.* O Sir! we are still believers in the Christian religion.

*Consid.* Why then, Christian believers are at liberty to doubt the certainty of every truth of Revelation itself; even Jews and Mohammedans believe a part of the Bible, but deny the rest. I beg leave therefore, further to ask, if this be Christianity, what is Infidelity?\*

*Wiseh.* Sir, the question is easily answered; some few infidels doubt, whether there ever was such a person as Jesus Christ; and others of them think there is no future state; but we all believe there will be a future state, and that there was such a person as *Jesus, the son of Mary*; but then we do not conceive ourselves bound to believe the story of his miraculous conception, or his pre-existence, as it is called; or the strange inconsistent, mysterious doctrine of the *Trinity*: and among other “corruptions of Christianity,” contrary to what we esteem the *rational* and “the true Gospel of Christ,” we reject what is commonly called the doctrine of the atonement: “in every shape, and under every modification of it, it is un-

\* When Dr. Priestley had made this country too hot to hold him, by his bad politics and infidel principles, (however the treatment he met with is to be lamented,) he went to America; from thence, in a letter to Mr. Belsham, dated April 23, 1813, speaking of Mr. Jefferson, their former President, he observes, that he (Mr. J.) is generally considered as an unbeliever, *i. e.* an *infidel*. If so (adds the Dr.) HE CANNOT BE FAR FROM US. Their own acknowledgment is quite sufficient, a Socinian is the next door neighbour to an infidel. Mr. William Wells, a Boston infidel; in a letter to Mr. B. says, “Unitarianism consists rather, in *not* believing.” It shall be left with them to rebut the charge if they can. A man that does not believe is an infidel.

founded in the Christian revelation.\*" Nor can we believe, that there is any such being as the Holy Spirit. Consequently we have nothing to do with the abstruse notion of regeneration, or as it is called, the work of the Spirit; we believe that such sort of expressions are to be taken as *oriental figures*, or as "*tropical language*;" and that it only means a good disposition. We therefore, consequently deny the popular doctrine of original sin,† as there is quite as much virtue as vice in the world: we have no doubt at all, as to the devil, that he is entirely a fabulous character; and as to what is said concerning those who are possessed of the devil, it were irrational to suppose, that it could mean any thing further than that "they were mad, or had hysteric fits:" as to the existence of angels, "though there are *frequent allusions* to it in the New Testament," yet it is "a doctrine that *cannot be proved or made probable* FROM

\* Belsham's Caution against Popular Errors, p. 15. Peremptory assertions, and positive denials, are the principal weapons of a Socinian.

† Mr. Belsham in his discourse against what he calls Popular Errors, and from which Mr. Wisehead is now making extracts, speaking against original sin, insinuates, as though we believed in the damnation of infants. Can he be so ignorant of matters of fact, as not to know, that the insinuation is utterly false?‡ I think he must know how almost universally it is admitted among the people he thus slanders, that the imputation of the first Adam's guilt is entirely done away, by the imputation of the second Adam's righteousness, among all those, who have not sinned wilfully or deliberately, after the similitude of Adam's transgression. We shall presently see other methods adopted, to evade the awful truth of man's depravity, as held forth in Scripture, and evidenced by universal experience; but I think, the reader will not be a little struck with horror and surprise, when he notes the following extract from the above-mentioned sermon. "*This abominable doctrine [Original Sin] represents the wise and righteous Governor of the Universe, as a more savage tyrant, than the most merciless despot that ever cursed the human race,*" p. 19. Such is the horrid language of one of those gentlemen who wish to be famed for their moderation!!!

‡ See "Infant Salvation," an Essay, &c.

THE LIGHT OF NATURE;" and what have we got to do with the New Testament, while it contradicts the light of nature? Notwithstanding therefore the *allusion*, we choose to say, "this is no where taught as a doctrine of revelation. A *judicious* Christian therefore, will discard it from his creed; and that, not only as a groundless, but as a *useless* and *pernicious* tenet, which tends to diminish our regard to the omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent God, and to excite superstitious respect to, and unreasonable expectations from, *imaginary and fictitious* beings.\*" When therefore, we hear how Jesus was tempted of the devil in the wilderness, it was, (for we always talk very *rational* in our way,) only an *allusion to a fictitious being*; and the proper, and most *rational* meaning is, that he was fighting with some good and bad thoughts which alternately possessed him; but such were the Eastern metaphors and Oriental figures then in use.†

\* Belsham's Caution, p. 21.

† There is a very curious, though almost forgotten paper, in which the Unitarians, as they call themselves, in opposition to those who hold the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, expressly claim kindred with the Mahometans. It is an address from two English Socinians or Arians, (it matters little which,) "in their own names, and in that of a multitude of their persuasion," whom they style "a wise and religious sort of people," to the Morocco ambassador at the court of Charles the 2nd, and is entitled, "An Epistle Dedicatory, to his illustrious Excellency, Ameth Ben Ameth, Ambassador of the Mighty Emperor of Fez and Morocco, to Charles 2nd, King of Great Britain."

In this "Epistle Dedicatory," they tell his Mahometan Excellency that the faith of his countrymen and sect is much purer in the article "touching the belief of an only sovereign God," and "many other wholesome doctrines," than the faith of either Papal or Protestant Christendom: seeing that about these doctrines in which they, the Mahometans, "persevere," this, our western part of the world, "the British isles and European continent, "are declined into several errors from the integrity of their predecessors." And they "heartily salute and congratulate his Excellency and all who were with him, as votaries and fellow-worshippers of that sole supreme

*Consid.* Then Sir, might it not have sounded still more *rational*, had you made it out, that he was fighting with two Eastern metaphors; or Oriental figures? that when the angel spoke to Zacharias about the

deity of the Almighty Father and Creator." Observe, they are not "fellow worshippers" with Christians in this matter, (God be praised!) but with Mahometans; that they "greatly rejoice and thank his Divine Bounty that hath preserved the Emperor of Morocco and his people," being Mahometans, in the excellent knowledge of that truth, already mentioned, which the Christian world, it seems had lost; and they assure his Excellency, which is a certain verity, that in those important points," viz. the Unitarian doctrines concerning God they "draw nigher to the Mahometans, than all other Protestant or Papal Christians." And they furthermore state to his Excellency, that they "are their," the Mahometans, "nearest fellow champions for those truths:" and moreover, "that God had raised up their Mahomet to defend the same truth;" viz. "the faith of one Supreme God with the sword, as a scourge on those idolizing Christians," i. e. all who believe in the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; even as "they, with their Unitarian brethren," had been accustomed to defend it with their pens." Behold a "defender of the faith," far goodlier than Henry the VIIIth, and much dearer to the Unitarians than any of his successors, not excepting Edward the VIth, or William of Orange! Behold an ancient and avowed alliance; the sword of Mahomet and the Unitarian pen!" All this and more in a style of fawning compliment, from a set of professed Christians to an ambassador of the great Imposture; who probably honored their two representatives, the instant their backs were turned, with the ordinary loving appellation of "Christian dogs."

The whole of this precious "Epistle," is prefixed to Leslie's "Socinian controversy discussed." Theol. Works, Vol. I. 207—211.

Such an acknowledged coincidence between Unitarianism and Mahometanism, goes far to justify the assertion, that there is no very wide difference between Unitarians and Deists. But we are not left to construction or inference on this head. The affinity is distinctly avowed by no less a personage than the Colossal English Socinian, the late Dr. Joseph Priestley, in a letter to his friend, Mr. Belsham, dated "Northumberland, April 23, 1813," speaking of Mr. Jefferson, former President of the United States, the Doctor observes, that he (Mr. Jefferson) is generally considered as an unbeliever, i. e. an infidel. "If so however he cannot be far from us." Here is

birth of John, the forerunner of our Lord, he should not have said, "I am Gabriel," but "I am an Oriental figure?" and that it was nothing but an Oriental figure that spoke to Mary on the same subject? and that Eastern metaphors, or Oriental figures appeared unto the shepherds, and sang "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men;" and then again, that our Lord had another meeting of these Eastern metaphors and Oriental figures in the mount of transfiguration? that an Eastern metaphor opened the prison in which Peter was confined, and that an Oriental figure knocked off his fetters? that Paul was converted at the sight of these Eastern metaphors? that Stephen saw somewhat of the like sort when he was stoned? and that an Eastern metaphor stood by Paul when near shipwrecked? And if these be not enough, I could give you some further lucubrations on your *rational* way of explaining these Eastern metaphors.\*

a fair and full confession, that infidelity and Socinianism are near neighbours; or else, a person allowed to be an infidel, would be "far off" from a Socinian, which Dr. Priestley says is not the fact. We say so too, and that they had much better shake hands at once, than keep up an unmeaning warfare: especially as William Wells, Esquire, of Boston, a gentleman of talent and a scholar, "whose zeal," to quote Mr. Belsham, "whose zeal for truth," i. e. Socinianism, "is beyond all praise," has told us in a letter to Mr. B. March 31, 1812, "that Unitarianism consists rather in not believing!!" (a) Now if faith is so essential to the character of true Christians, that word of their God denominates them from that very thing, believers; then, the Unitarians, themselves being judges, are far enough from Christians! See Dr. Mason's admirable publication on Catholic Communion, p. 98, &c.

\* The Socinians suppose they have a right to take such preposterous liberties on this subject, because these spiritual existences are described as being "powers and virtues;" therefore they are not real existences, but figurative allusions. We will produce a few more passages, where the real existence of such spirits is positively mentioned, and then we shall see how far common sense will befriend them in their *rational* religion.

Belzebug, the prince of the devils—the prince of the eastern metaphors.



*Wiseh.* Sir, all our great divines are not quite of the same way of thinking, concerning these matters; for some of them have thought, that St. Paul, when he conceived he saw the vision, was under a tempo-

Unto which of the Angels (oriental figures) said he at any time, This day have I begotten thee; Let the Angels of God (eastern metaphors) worship him?

Our Lord cast out a whole legior of eastern metaphors from the man among the tombs, and that it was several of these tropical figures that possessed two thousand swine at the same time, and to alarm them in such a manner, as to drive them into the sea.

“Whether there be thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers?” All tropical language—only eastern metaphors.

Christ “spoiled principalities and powers:” he spoiled eastern metaphors and oriental figures.

The ministering spirits “sent forth to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation,” these are also to be understood as nonentities or oriental figures.

“The angels (oriental figures) who kept not their first estate.”

“There was fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (for an eastern metaphor and his oriental figures)—But enough of this from the New Testament, by way of giving a fair specimen of the wisdom of those, who can bestow such high compliments on themselves, and on the *rationality* of their religion.

A few instances from the Old Testament shall also be given, as further embellishments of these *rational* evasions.

An angel appeared to Manoah, foretold the birth of Samuel, and instructed him respecting his education: his appearance was very terrible or glorious; he did wondrously, and in the flame of a sacrifice ascended into glory. All this was done by an eastern metaphor.

An angel was commissioned to punish Israel with a tremendous plague, when David numbered the people; it is said “the angel of the Lord stretched out his hand.” N. B. Eastern metaphors have got hands; and again, the Angel of the Lord stood between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand. N. B. Tropical figures carry drawn swords. We are further told, The angel of the Lord stood by the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. N. B. These standings, and movings, and actings, were all accomplished by an eastern metaphor.

The angel of the Lord that encamped around his people, when he brought them out of Egypt, first stood before them, and then went behind them; strange, that nothing but a tro-

rary derangement; and perhaps, Stephen might have had a short phrenzy fit like Paul; and as for the story of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, that has been supposed to be nothing more than the narrative of a vision—or “*a scenical exhibition of images upon the mind of the entranced prophet.*”\*

*Consid.* So that it is to be supposed, that Christ slept forty days and forty nights, and afterwards related his dreams.

*Wiseh.* Sir, such is the way our divines have solved the difficulty.

*Consid.* Do you mean by all this, to prove that your system, if it deserves the name, has nothing to do with infidelity?†

pical figure should have had such an influence on Pharaoh and all his hosts!

Again. Abraham had a visit from three of these eastern metaphors, and he was so sure of their positive existence, that he prepared an entertainment for them. While the plentiful repast was all in the eastern style; and very properly, for he had to entertain three eastern metaphors. There was also a long conversation held between these eastern metaphors and Abraham, Sarah, and Lot; and we are told of the great care they all took to deliver the righteous man out of Sodom. This is a notable proof what a wonderful book will be exhibited before the world, when their *rational* comment upon the Scriptures, shall appear to *illuminate* the human mind.

The last instance which we will produce, out of a large variety, shall be taken from the history of Balaam. The ass of the soothsayer was thrice opposed by the angel of the Lord, *i. e.* by an eastern metaphor, and by this means he crushed his foot against the wall. The Lord spoke unto him, as through the mouth of the ass, and thus “forbad the madness of the prophet.” What a strange timid ass must Balaam’s ass have been, to have been so afraid of a tropical figure; or what stupid asses must those be who thus interpret the word of God? or what brainless asses we all must be, to abide by interpretations so preposterous and absurd? And if this be not sufficient to expose the folly of the sadusaiac spirit of the day, nothing is.

\* Harwood’s New Testament.

† Had Mr. Considerate entered more deeply into the controversy, by arguing from the authority of the Scriptures against

*Wiseh.* Sir, we disown the charge, we are not such infidels as to deny the divine mission of Jesus; though we believe he is in himself to be considered "as a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, naturally as

the sentiments of Mr. Wisehead, according to his new notions of the volume of inspiration, it could have been of no avail; for if men of such sentiments cannot succeed, by quirks and quibbles, and by the aid of the most unnatural far-fetched interpretations, the next business is to invalidate the book itself, agreeably to the samples above given: so that it is impossible to deal with a Socinian, but as you would with a Deist. The arguments, therefore, taken up by Lardner on the credibility of the Gospels, and again lately brought forward against the Deists by Paley,\* will prove the best answers against the Socinian notions of the Bible. And I think those modern perverters of Christianity, must know, how widely they differ from the primitive Christians as it relates to the authority of the sacred volume. Brevity allows me to mention only some of the expressions during the first ages of the church, as they are to be found in Paley, p. 230—282. Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, says, "these things the holy Scriptures teach, and all who were *moved by the Holy Spirit*."—"Concerning the righteousness which the law teaches, the like things are to be found in the Prophets and the Gospels, because that *all being inspired*, spoke by one and the same Spirit." They are therefore frequently called the divine Scriptures—"the sacred fountain of truth:" and Origen (against Celsus) declares, that both Jewish and New Testament Scriptures, are believed in the Churches to be *divine*.

Novatus says, "That Christ is not only man, but God also, is proved by the sacred authority of the divine writings.—The divine Scripture easily detects and confutes the frauds of heretics;" and he calls them "The heavenly Scriptures which *never deceive*." Further, in all the controversies between the Arians, Athanasians, and the admirers of Origen's platonic notions, however some of them differed from the truths contained in the Scriptures, yet they always acknowledged their decision was definitive: That they were the certain guide to truth, given for that purpose by God himself: The divinely inspired Scriptures." I therefore observe, that the modern notion of the Bible, as it is now before us, presents us with one of the boldest attacks ever yet made on its sacred authority,, and it is unsup-

\* Though no man has written better respecting the authenticity of revelation, yet few have gone so far in giving up many of the divine truths therein contained. His latter publications however evidently manifest a nearer approach to the essential doctrines of the Gospel.

*weak, as fallible, and as PECCABLE as other men, possessed of no natural advantages over his father Joseph, or any other man in a similar situation in life in Judea:\** yet, that he was commissioned by the Supreme Being, to instruct mankind in pure principles of morality, so far as he understood them; for “though we admit that Jesus taught the truth in a popular way, yet we *very much doubt*, whether in some instances, he properly and accurately understood it!!!†

*Consid.* Is this the voice of Mr. Wisehead, or the ghost of some departed infidel, that is uttering such dangerous and profane insinuations against the person, and even moral character of our blessed Lord? If this be his just character, what good can we get by following such an uncertain leader? and what can we expect from the Bible itself, but that it will distract and puzzle the minds of all who read it?

*Wiseh.* Dear Sir, I am sorry you should be so alarmed, but I only meant to soften matters, by shewing you, that it is no wonder if those well-intentioned men, who became the followers of Jesus, who was a *fallible and peccable man*, and had only a popular way of preaching what he did not *properly and accurately understand*: I say it cannot be wondered at, if they also blundered, and mistook matters still more frequently than their Master.

*Mrs. Toog.* Why Mr. Wisehead, you quite shock me! It appears as though you believed next to nothing about our blessed Savior, or that there is scarcely either God or devil---though I don't join in with Mr. Lovegood, and his followers, in running down all

ported by all writers, almost in every age of the Church; nor can they produce in support of such sentiments, any other argument than bold unqualified assertions from their own authority. Had they searched into antiquity, they would have been more modest, and better taught.

\* Priestley's Letters to Dr. Horne, p. 21.

† Priestley on Necessity.

*man's merits*; yet I am sure, I don't know what we should do without our Savior's merits also, to make up our deficiencies, after we have done our duty as well as we can.

*Consid.* Why madam, I am not a little alarmed, as well as yourself; for according to this, almost the whole of Christianity, allowed by reason, is, whether Jesus Christ was a good man or an impostor; and even that is a matter of doubt, for now it seems he is *peccable* as well as fallible. Do you mean to prove that Christ was wicked, as well as weak?

*Wiseh.* Sir, I think I can make it out, that Jesus was actually *peccable* as well as fallible, though you seem to be so shocked at our "true Gospel," and *rational* notions of religion; and of this, I will give you an instance. He frequently accommodated his doctrine to the vulgar errors of the day: and I have before observed, that *the doctrine of angels and devils, was a pernicious tenet, and which tended to diminish our regard to the omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent God; and though Jesus was his mere servant, yet "he seems to use the word soul, as though expressive of something distinct from the body; but if he did, which, however is not certain, he might do it in conformity with the prevailing opinion of the times, in the same manner as he applies being possessed of demons to madmen, and speaks to madmen, as if they were actuated by evil spirits, though he CERTAINLY did not believe the existence of such demons.\**

*Consid.* I think Sir, you have now done the business completely. According to your doctrine the art of a Jesuit could scarcely equal the designs of Jesus Christ; and if the author of Christianity founded his religion by such gross impositions on the credulity and weakness of mankind, the sooner we renounce it the better.

*Spitef.* Though I hate Lovegood's enthusiasm, yet I think you are almost as far gone in infidelity, as he



is in enthusiasm. I really did not suppose that your *rational* religion, would have brought you to all this!

*Wiseh.* Sir, I am only "removing the *rubbish* which loads and disgraces the foundation.\*"

*Consid.* It appears to me, as if you were not only clearing away what you call rubbish, but foundation and all; but have you done Sir?

*Wiseh.* No Sir; I confess there are other erroneous and irrational notions which we equally disapprove: for instance, "The doctrine of an intermediate state, or a state of conscious existence between death and the resurrection;" this must be "discarded, if we are desirous to regulate our faith by the *standard of reason*, of truth, and of Christianity.†"

*Consid.* Of Christianity! Why did not St. Paul say that he desired to depart, or as he explains it, not to abide in the flesh; that he might be with Christ?

*Wiseh.* O Sir! I have before said, that Paul was very weak and inconclusive in what he advanced, but I don't think this was the doctrine of the founder of Christianity.

*Consid.* Why did not Christ himself say to the thief, "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise?"

*Wiseh.* O Sir! but you have not considered the proper *rational* interpretation of that text, as given by our learned divines; they only just alter the stop, and then it reads---"Verily I say unto thee this day; ---thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

*Consid.* This is indeed, a capital proof of the *rationality* of your divines! but do they mean this as an argument, or a joke? for according to this, I might say to a poor man who was half starving, "Verily I say unto you this day;---I will give you a loaf of bread." And when for several days I delay my promise, while he accuses me of a breach of my word, I have nothing to do but to say, he did not understand

\* Belsham's Caution.

† Belsham's Caution.

my stops; and that I was not bound to fulfil my promise for a month after I had made it." And again,---if a physician says---"To-day I say; I'll visit such a poor man, ill of a fever;" but still delays till his patient dies, and is accused of cruelty; yet all this arose from their neglect, in not observing where the physician designed to have made his stops. The same sort of joke also (for I cannot call it argument) has been played off by your divines, on the words of Thomas, when he solemnly appealed to our Lord, and said, "My Lord and my God!" as if it was said in a fit of sudden surprise, and meant nothing. The exclamation can therefore only be accounted for, on the profane principle of "taking the Lord's name in vain." But it is well known that the Jews, even with a superstitious awe, abstained from mentioning the LORD'S name, lest at any time they should take his sacred name in vain.

*Wiseh.* O Sir! if you do not like this interpretation; you should remember that I have already proved, that Jesus was both *fallible* and *peccable*; so that in this respect also, he might be under the necessity ("though I do not think that our Lord or his apostles rightly understood the doctrine of necessity,\*") of saying something *he did not believe, in conformity to the prevailing opinion of the times.*

*Consid.* Ah Sir! what shocking language is this! Did then our holy Redeemer not only preach lies, but even die with a lie in his mouth? And is all this to prove you are no infidel? Could any infidel upon earth advance a doctrine more abominable and profane? And can you wonder that so many of your sentiments make such an easy transition into downright infidelity itself?

*Spitef.* [To Wisehead.] Why I confess, what Mr. Considerate says has a deal of truth in it; for Jack Pert, a saucy young fellow, who goes to your meeting, came into my school-room, while I was writing a

\* Priestley on Necessity.

paper for the Anti-jacobin Review, took up one of the school boy's old Bibles and said, that in his opinion the truth lay between the Deists and Socinians, though he was not quite wise enough to fix the exact line of demarcation between them. I always thought that you Dissenters go a *devilish*\* deal too far. I can't make you out; some of you are infidels, while others are downright enthusiasts; but I never go into any of your *conventicles*.

*Consid.* I wish Mr. Spiteful, you would not interrupt our conversation just for the present, I have a few more questions to ask Mr. Wisehead. [To Mr. Wisehead.] Pray Sir, have you any more rubbish to clear away?

*Wiseh.* Yes Sir, "the obligation of sabbatical institutions."

*Consid.* Is that rubbish also?

*Wiseh.* Rubbish Sir, it is all Jewish rubbish, "that one day should be more holy than another: or that any occupation whatever, that is morally lawful on one day, should be morally unlawful on another, is a distinction unfounded in *reason*, wholly unauthorised by Jesus and his apostles, and unknown in the primitive and purest ages of the church.†"

*Consid.* Why, then there would be no great harm directly as your Doctor, or Mr. Smirking, gets out of the pulpit, if all three of you were to run together to the play-house. But what a wonderful knack you gentlemen have of proving your point, by bold unqualified assertions, and then resorting to a proud conceit of your own *rationality* to support them! According to my reading however, the abstinence from menial labor, that we might devote ourselves to

\* No wonder that this was a favourite expression of Mr. Spiteful and the Anti-jacobin Reviewers, both being under the influence of such a devilish disposition.

† Belsham's Caution, p. 26. How contemptible is the cant of these men, to talk about the primitive and pure ages of the church.

God one day in seven, was ordained from the very creation of the world; and is therefore no new institution belonging to the Jewish economy; and this which also was from the very first, has been as invariably observed through the Christian dispensation. I am not a little surprised at the quick riddance you make of what you gentlemen call rubbish; and to be plain with you Sir, I fear if you and the rest of your rational fraternity, can get rid of that sacred day of rest, so solemnly urged upon us throughout the word of God, I question if the little morality that exists among us, will not soon be destroyed; while the plentiful revival of the hangman's trade, will be the natural result.

*Wiseh.* O shocking Mr. Considerate! is it possible that you can entertain such an opinion of our rational religion, as all that.

*Consid.* Yes Sir, and matters of fact prove the point. How many at the gallows have confessed that by sabbath-breaking they were introduced into all other criminal excesses that brought them to such a fatal end? and if such sort of preaching were as universal as it is pestilential, the result would be dreadful.

*Wiseh.* Though you take me up so warmly, yet I have only followed a great author\* in our way, in what he calls rubbish.

*Consid.* And perhaps you have yet some more rubbish to clear away. I have a curiosity to hear the last of it.

*Wiseh.* Why I remember the last thing he mentioned as rubbish was, "the plenary inspiration of all the books, both of the Jewish and Christian scriptures, which he esteems an error, that an *inquisitive* and *judicious* Christian, will see abundant reason to discard.†"

\* Belsham.

† Belsham's Caution, p. 27. So that there are no inquisitive and judicious Christians, excepting those who can run all the

*Consid.* I think that has been plentifully settled already. If the greatest prophet in all the Bible, was but a *fallible and peccable man*, no wonder that we have nothing better than a *lame account* of matters from the rest of them; so that from the Bible itself, the worst of errors have originated. Millions have positively been misguided thereby. Where one person is set right, at least a hundred have been led wrong by the same book, and in a variety of instances; and so grossly misguided, as that a mere man is almost universally worshipped as the eternal God; and consequently, such have fallen into the grossest idolatry, by the ill-judged language of its mistaken authors. Is not this making out the Bible to be the worst written book in the world, which is only to be understood by a set of the most extravagant and far-fetched interpretations, invented by a set of men, who are pleased to set themselves up as being more *rational* than the rest of their neighbours? But have you now done with your rubbish Sir?

*Wiseh.* Not quite Sir; for another admired writer of ours, speaks about some strange and *irrational* notions respecting heaven, as being rubbish.

*Consid.* What then are our expectations of heaven and glory, to be esteemed rubbish?

*Wiseh.* Why Sir, you know there are some visionary notions, about intellectual happiness, swimming upon the surface of some people's brains, about a heaven independent of a material existence; and as our *reason* will not allow us to suppose there is any existence, but that which is material; so we consequently expect a material heaven, made up at least of some of the same enjoyments we have in our present state. We have no notion of that superangelic state of happiness, which some people are so fond of talking of.

abominable lengths of Mr. Belsham and his admirers. Is this the language of modesty and reason, or of arrogance and empty pride?



*Consid.* Then it should seem your notions of heaven, are very nearly similar to that of another great divine in the east, from whence the metaphors come, Doctor Mohammed, who was also, in many other points, of your way of thinking; and he was quite as much a believer in Jesus, as a great prophet, as yourselves. Count Swedenburgh has also diverted his admirers with the same sort of speculation respecting his views of a material heaven. Sir, will you entertain us a little longer with a further descant on *your* material heaven?

*Miss Polly.* (overhears.) Well, I confess I should like such a sort of heaven as yours best; I should not like to be psalm-singing and serving God to all eternity. I don't know what *introducement* we should have to go to heaven, if we had not something better than all that.

*Miss Prateap.* And I should like the same sort of heaven as you do Miss Polly. I should be afraid heaven would be a strange melancholy and mopish place, if we had nothing better than religion.

*Consid.* But ladies, I hope you won't interrupt Mr. Wisehead in giving us a further description of his expected heaven; I rather suppose he'll make it out to be a very curious place.

*Wiseh.* Sir, though you seem to ridicule my notions of a future state; yet I shall not be afraid to give you a full view of the happiness expected after the resurrection, by those of our denomination, in the words of one of our *wisest* and most *rational* divines: "The change of our condition by death, says this author, may not be so great as we are apt to imagine. As our *natures* will not be changed, but only *improved*, we have no reason to think that the *future world* (which will be adapted to our merely improved nature) will be *materially different from this*. And indeed why should we ask, or expect any thing more? If we should still be obliged to provide for our subsistence by exercise, or labor; is that a thing to be complained of by those, who are supposed to have acquired fixed

habits of industry, becoming rational beings, and who have never been able to bear the languor of absolute rest, or indolence.? Our future happiness has with much reason been supposed to arise from an increase of knowledge. But if we should have nothing more than the means of knowledge furnished us as we have here, and be left to our own labor to find it out, is that to be complained of by those, who will have acquired both a *love of truth*, and a habit of enquiring after it? To make discoveries ourselves, though the search may require time and labor, is unspeakably more pleasing than to learn every thing by the information of others. If the *immortality* that is promised to us in the Gospel, should not be *necessary* and *absolute*, and we should only have the *certain means* of making ourselves immortal, we should have much to be thankful for. What the scriptures inform us concerning a future life, is expressed in general terms, and often in figurative language. A more particular knowledge of it is wisely concealed from us.”\*

*Mrs. Toog.* 'Las Sir! I think you must be of the Sadducees' religion; for when I was reading the psalms and lessons the other day, I minded how our Lord contradicted the wicked notion of the Sadducees about heaven; how that we then shall “neither marry, nor be given in marriage, but be as the Angels of God.”

*Wiseh.* Our great divine, madam, has not settled that point; but the business about angels has been completely settled; they are only *allusions to imaginary beings*; so that the *fallible* and *peccable man Jesus*, either through ignorance mistook, or through design misled, the people into one of the popular errors of the day.

*Mrs. Toog.* Why Mr. Wisehead, this talk is as bad as common cursing and swearing.

*Consid.* I think madam, it is much worse than common cursing and swearing; for what is said on

\* Priestley's Sermon on the Death of Mr. Robinson, p. 18.

these occasions to prove our blessed God and Savior was a *fallible and peccable man*, has been done after the most mature and deliberate consideration; and such serious charges against him, must be the most blasphemous and profane; while at the same time, it is urged, from those who pretend to serve a fallible and peccable man, as the great prophet of the Christian church. I should certainly prefer reason to the Bible, if it can be proved that such a man, who has *wilfully and deliberately deceived the people, contrary to his own judgment*, is supposed to be the principal character of that book. I am sure, that downright Deism is much preferable to such sort of Christianity; but I think, you are now nearly arrived at the end of your journey; nothing is left but that you should positively deny the miracles of our Lord, and the resurrection, which in my opinion, is still more beyond the reach of reason, than any other doctrine of revelation; and then you will be as complete a Deist as Hume, Gibbon, or the vulgar blasphemous Tom Paine.

*Wiseh.* Why Sir, I hope you do not think me so far gone from the Christian religion as all that?

*Consid.* Why have not the Jews themselves acknowledged, that you have renounced the Christianity their soul abhors? \* and are not infidels your admirers? Thus, while we are left to the mere guidance of reason and nature, see what we get by attempting to correct the supposed errors of the Bible: and into what a labyrinth we are led by attempting to bring that book to our reason, instead of submitting our reason to the Bible. But while you conceive yourself at liberty thus to triumph in the powers of reason, over the truths of revelation, let me ask you, how far you can further triumph on the effects of such preaching over the hearts and conduct of the multitude of notorious sinners, that abound in our land?

*Wiseh.* Sir, that is not our fault, but the fault of those who won't come to hear our ministers. Though

\* See Levi's Letters to Priestley.

we are sure our religion is *rational*, yet we lament it is not *popular*. But I hope Sir, we shall always make it evident, that we have too much respect to our characters, to court the applause of the vulgar, in order that our ministers may be registered among the *popular* preachers of the day.

*Spitef.* Well said Mr. Wisehead. Though I don't like you in all points, yet I do in this. I should be ashamed to be followed by such a mob as have taken to run after Lovegood, for the sake of hearing his *extemporaneous rant*. Why, they say his Parish is made like a horse fair on a Sunday, by a set of people galloping after him from every quarter.

*Consid.* Ah! Mr. Spiteful, you never need fear the contempt of being a popular preacher.

*Wiseh.* A wise and judicious preacher never can expect to be popular, as the common people are not likely to understand him. I don't think it is a proof that a man is a good preacher, because he is popular, or that a man is a bad preacher, because he is not followed by the inconsiderate multitude.

*Consid.* What then, is it a sign that a man is a good preacher, because he has scarcely any one to hear him? and is a man a bad preacher, because he is well attended? Pray Sir, what is the end of preaching? I should suppose, to instruct the ignorant. But if the ignorant can't understand the preacher, and will not even give him a hearing, because of his supposed wisdom and learning, where can be the good of it. It is said of our Lord himself, that "the common people heard him gladly:" and no wonder at it; "for he taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes:" and it is said of the preaching of John the Baptist, "that Jerusalem and all Judea, and the regions round about went after him." Were they bad preachers, because they were popular? Is not that man the best preacher, who does the most good? The question therefore has not been answered, but rather evaded, as it respects the utility of such a mode of preaching.

*Wiseh.* Really Sir, our Doctor and Mr. Smirking do their best endeavors, and if they have not been successful in reclaiming the vicious from the error of their ways; yet we hope that others who are already virtuous, are kept in the ways of virtue.

*Consid.* It should seem then, that your way of doing good, is that you do no harm; and it would be strange indeed, if by all your lectures against the deformity of vice, and on the beauties of morality, the people should lose the little they already possessed. But when you talk of the best endeavors being exerted, why is it that they are exerted all in vain, as it respects the salvation of man from sin? I think Sir, I can tell you the cause of it. All Bible truths and Bible language, are kept out of the question. Of what avail was all the moral philosophy among the heathens; and of what avail is all the heathenish bare-weight morality, among too many, professing Christianity in the present day, where the preaching of the Gospel, which alone is "the power of God unto salvation," is omitted?

*Wiseh.* "The power of God unto salvation!" Upon my word Sir, that sounds like a very odd expression. What am I to understand by it?

*Consid.* Why Sir, it is one of the odd expressions found in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans; but as those epistles are so low in your esteem, no wonder that such expressions sound in your ears so odd and uncouth. But in my opinion, it is an expression of peculiar wisdom, dignity, and strength. I am not afraid to assert it, that all true religion is nothing less than the power or influence of God himself on the heart. And must there not be a principle before ever there can be a practice? can any persons be reformed before he is renewed? And after all, can much of the preaching of the present day be even called *moral preaching*? How often are we told, how much less is required of us in our *lapsed* state, than was originally demanded by the law! and how many apologies are at times brought forth to palliate



the vices and deep corruptions of the human mind! Is this preaching morality, or the quintessence of antinomianism? \*

*Wiseh.* I really think Sir, you strain matters a deal too hard, and that your ideas are much too gloomy, as they respect the human race. That there are some among whom the *protuberances* and *excrescences* of vice are very predominant, we cannot but admit: but still I suppose it is the virtuous habit that principally prevails, and we should not depreciate the virtues of mankind on account of their vices. A great divine of our denomination has given it as his opinion, that “there *may* be a considerable preponderance of virtues, even in characters justly estimated as vicious: and likewise that the *quantity* of virtue in the world, *may* far exceed that of vice; though the *number* of virtuous characters *may* be less than that of vicious ones:” and again, “few characters are flagrantly wicked; and perhaps, *even in the worst of men*, good habits and actions are *more numerous than the contrary*.” Certainly they are so in the majority of mankind, and preponderant virtue is almost universal;” † and if there be a small degree of troublesome vice in the world, another able divine, who is the glory of our denomination, in a very learned treatise he wrote on the doctrine of necessity, has settled the business completely, by proving that “God is the author of sin, and may do evil, provided good may come.” ‡

\* This expression is derived from the Greek, and means that which is *against the Law*.

† Belsham’s Review of Wilberforce, p. 39.

‡ On Necessity, p. 117—121. Now would any one think it, that those very people, who have taken such an astonishing alarm at the frightful doctrines of Calvinism, have actually found their refuge in the sentiments of the worst of infidel philosophers, making it out, that God himself is the author of sin; and that is their way of getting rid of what God has revealed, that he “made man upright,” but man has “sought out for himself many inventions.” Thus, by contradicting the

*Consid.* Why, then vice is not only to be little thought of, but seems almost allowable, provided, according to your conceit, virtue preponderates; or according, I must call it, to your blasphemous proposition, that God can be the author of evil. But can you for a moment suppose that the least vice should be admitted before our most holy God; when it is said, “that for every idle word that man shall speak, he shall give an account thereof, at the day of judgment;” yea, that he will bring “every thought into judgment?” as every lascivious thought before him is adultery, and every angry thought not less than murder in his sight. Shall we try how this rule will bear between man and man? Suppose Mr. Dolittle, our Justice, were to say of the thief when brought before him, He generally pays for his goods as he purchases them, though now and then he is under the necessity of stealing to make his payments good: so that when he acts the part of a *knave*, it is with an *honest* and *virtuous* design. Therefore, we must not be too severe with him; for he is an honest fellow, on the whole; and his honest actions outweigh his thievish ones. And again; should the mad drunkard say, I never get drunk above twice in the week, and then all the rest of my time I am very sober: surely, you’ll not call me a drunkard upon this account, as I hope my sober fits are more than my drunken ones. Or shall we suppose the common reprobate to plead his cause, by saying, I don’t swear near half my time, and these are but thoughtless words; and words can hurt nobody: and let me swear ever so often, I say more

Bible account of the fall, which lays all the evil of sin to the charge of man; they bring it home against God himself, with this reserve only—provided that good may result from it in the end; which is making the Divine Being to speak and act like the worst of men, who say, “Let us do evil that good may come; whose damnation is just.” Let such a deity be adored by these sons of *reason* as long as they chuse; but let my wisdom lie low before the altar of revelation.—“O Israel! thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help.”

good words than bad ones, and scarcely ever neglect *saying my prayers* before going to bed. Now should we suppose, for the sake of argument, that there is more virtue than vice in the world, which I really doubt, notwithstanding your low notions of virtue, being no higher, as far as I can make them out, than a little morality or good manners, or just and civil behavior between man and man; yet are you not alarmed at your own sentiments, that the same sort of ideas of justice is supposed to exist in God, as would turn all things into confusion among men? Such however, have been the dreadful effects of lessening the eternal obligations of the law, in order that we may obey it just so far as we like best; and such are the *antinomian* principles of all the pharisees, and formalists on the earth.

*Spitef.* Sir, though I cannot altogether go with Mr. Wisehead, yet your strict notions of religion are enough to drive us all into despair. I am for just such a religion as Mr. Archdeacon Smoothtongue preached to us before the corporation the other day. You remember his text Sir;—"Men shall be lovers of their own selves." I am sure Sir, it was an admirable sermon.

*Wiseh.* Yes Sir, I admired it much. I thought it an excellent *rational* discourse; for though I should not like to be a conformist to your established church, by subscribing to the "horrid dogmas of Calvin," which are to be found in such abundance in the Articles and Liturgy of the Church of England; yet I am not such a bigot, as to neglect an opportunity of hearing a good sermon, either in church or meeting.

*Spitef.* We had better not touch upon that point Mr. Wisehead; as that would bring on a controversy, which I am sure, we should not end to-night. But I know all you Dissenters are of opinion, that none but Lovegood's followers give us the true meaning of the doctrines of the church of England; but this is thinking very hard of the clergy.

*Wiseh.* Sir, I confess this is the universal opinion among all Dissenters; but I should not wish to touch you in a sore place.

*Consid.* From what has transpired this evening, it would be rather dangerous, in my opinion, to touch Mr. Spiteful on any of his sore places, as at times he is very apt to wince; but I must confess, I differ with both of you gentlemen very widely, respecting the goodness of Mr. Archdeacon Smoohtongue's sermon. First, I think when a man takes a text, he should explain the meaning of it. Now that text, as it stands in the Bible, evidently was designed to shew the evils of self-love, that it is a vicious principle in itself, and productive of evil in all its consequences; whereas the preacher turned it right about, and made it speak for a doctrine, which according to the word of God, it was his duty seriously to oppose.

*Spitef.* Well Sir, and did not the Archdeacon say, that the *extreme* of self-love, might be a vicious principle, though in *moderation* it was necessary for the benefit of mankind?

*Consid.* Yes Sir, I heard all that he had to say, and with a considerable degree of attention: but really I believe it will be with some difficulty that I can be persuaded to give up a point, on which the interest of holiness, and the glory of God so much depend. In my opinion the ultimate end of every action, should arise from a supreme love of God; and all subordinate love to ourselves and our fellow-creatures, is vicious and corrupted, but as it centers in our love towards him: likewise all the wickedness and oppression there is in the world, arise from this corrupted principle of self-love. When men love themselves, independent of God and godliness, they must be little better than devils in course. Such however, is the avowed principle of that thorough-paced French infidel, Volney; and in order to make the world twenty times more wicked than before, he has reduced it to a system: and we all know what has been the result of that

doctrine in his own nation at large. To speak plainly, I look upon it, that such sort of preaching is nothing better than infidelity in disguise; and as a proof of it, how nearly the Archdeacon appears to be of the same stamp, I don't know that he quoted a single passage out of the Bible, after he had taken his text.

*Wiseh.* O Sir! you know there are a great number of expressions in the Bible, that now sound in these *modern* days of Christianity, very barbarous and uncouth; and I really think, that those gentlemen who have the care of educating the young men of our denomination, for the ministry, do well in advising them not to *interlard* their sermons with too many texts of Scripture, as it could not but prove greatly detrimental to the elegance of their compositions; and if we can but reform the depraved taste of the day, by attending to our compositions, we have no doubt, but that we shall be as popular as any of our opponents.

*Spitef.* Really Sir, I am afraid you will quite overshoot the mark; you seem to make next to nothing of the Bible. You are giving Mr. Considerate a sad handle against yourself.

*Wiseh.* Why you may be assured of this Mr. Spiteful, that you never will be able to get the better of Mr. Considerate in point of argument, if he supposes he carries the question by quoting the epistles of Paul, and the "histories of Jesus." And I can give you a proof of this, which is quite to the point. A gentleman in the present parliament, and who is nearly related to the family of the Worthies in this neighbourhood, thought proper to turn author in divinity, and took it in his head to bring forward a long string of such antiquated notions in religion, as are now entirely exploded among all *rational* divines: and as you may suppose, in order that he might support his cause, his arguments were deduced from St. Paul's, and the rest of the Epistles.\* Some weakly

\* Wilberforce's Practical View, &c.



attempted to shake the ground he had taken, by arguing against him from the same authority: but an able divine of our denomination,\* stepped forward and did the business completely, by shewing that no conclusive argument could be drawn from a set of letters which were no farther worthy of estimation, than as letters written by good men, who were still liable to err, as well as ourselves. Thus he batterèd down the place of defence, in which our author supposed himself impregnable, and turned him forth to fight us in the open field of *reason* and speculation; and there, I'll assure you, as you may suppose, he *had him* completely; but while you make so much of the Bible, and while you suppose the author's of it were all *inspired*, you'll never be able to deny the truth of Mr. Lovegood's doctrine.

*Spitef.* What then, am I to believe that all their strange notions of grace and faith without works, are contained in the Bible? that man has no free will? and that if a man be one of the elect, let him do whatsoever he will, he *shan't be damned*; and if he be a reprobate, he must *go to hell and be damned*, if he is ever so good, and strives to be saved as much as ever he can?

*Madam Toog.* O shocking Mr. Spiteful! is it possible that any one can preach such bad doctrines as all that?

*Consid.* Mr. Spiteful madam, is fond of high colouring; but I perfectly agree with him that we may look into the Bible for sentiments like these, and never find them.

*Wiseh.* Though I can by no means admit Mr. Lovegood's notions in religion to be *rational*, yet it cannot be said that he or his followers carry matters so far as you represent them: and as to Mr. Lovegood,

\* See Belsham's Review—For a full answer to this pernicious book, and a defence of Mr. Wilberforce, see *Williams's Vindication of the Calvinistic Doctrines*, &c. 8vo.

I believe him to be a *good-hearted man*, though his sentiments in *theology* so widely differ from mine.

*Consid.* [To Mr. Spiteful.] Now Sir, I am sure Mr. Lovegood never holds forth justification without its fruits, as you seem to represent him. I myself heard him explain matters quite otherwise, but a fortnight ago; and very much to my satisfaction. He always tells us, that as there are none righteous, so none can be justified by their righteousness; and that though we are justified and saved by the merits and death of Jesus Christ only, yet that we are not to “continue in sin that grace may abound.” He observed on that occasion, that the king never pardons a thief, that he may have a licence to cheat and steal as long as he lives; and that all such crimes committed after a pardon, are deemed twenty times worse than those committed before. Besides, he talks much of the need and necessity of the Holy Spirit to change our hearts: and have you never ridiculed him on that score? Pray Sir, what do you yourself think we mean by that doctrine?

*Spitef.* How should I know Sir? It is strange indeed, that you should ask me about your meaning, as though I should know better than yourself, when you are so fond, with your wife and daughter, of *gadding about* after Lovegood. But I heard that he should have said, but a few Sundays ago, from one that heard him, “Now we conclude a man is justified by faith only, *without the deeds of the law.*” What do you think of that Sir? A fine fellow truly, to make such consequential conclusions, while he holds forth such abominable doctrines!

*Consid.* Why Sir, it is very unfortunate that you should have blundered upon the express words of Scripture, and suppose them to be the words of Mr. Lovegood; and especially as you have been just vindicating the Bible, I wonder that you should be so ignorant of its contents.

*Spitef.* Sir, it is impossible. I say it is impossible.

Mrs. Toogood, madam, lend me your Bible; and then Sir, you shall find them if you can.

*Madam Toog.* L—d Sir!\* you can't want the Bible, now you have just done playing at cards.

*Wiseh.* Really Mr. Spiteful, I would not have you put it to the test, for I remember reading some such words not very long ago; and I recollect it shocked me, when I thought of it, what a bad use, *vulgar* minds would be liable to make of such sort of expressions.

*Consid.* Yes Sir, I believe you'll find the passage in the third of the Romans: but I don't think we need to be shocked at the consequences of free forgiveness, when it is always connected with the idea of holiness; "that we may live unto his glory, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light."

*Spitef.* And I suppose Sir, that you think their horrid notions of predestination are also to be found in the Bible: but I am sure they are not.

*Consid.* I am sure they are not as well as yourself, as you have represented them; nor yet where you have placed them, in the brains of good Mr. Lovegood. I have heard in the word of God, of "an election according to the foreknowledge of God the Father; through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience;" and that "we are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son:" but an election *from* sin, that we may live *in* sin, is a doctrine as much abhorred by Mr. Lovegood, as it can be by you. No Sir! Mr. Lovegood is better taught to distinguish between causes and effects; and he always insists upon it, that the effect of our election is, that we may "live unto God;" and as to his opinion relative to the freedom of the will, I hope we have had enough upon that score already.

*Wiseh.* I am sure we have Sir. for it has given

\* These sort of religious old ladies, are very apt to take the Lord's name in vain.

me such a head-ache, that I have felt it ever since. [To Mrs. Toogood.] Can you give me a pinch of your cephalic snuff madam?

[The snuff-box is handed; Spiteful continues.]

*Spitef.* I have no sort of doubt, but that Lovegood knows how to gloss over his abominable tenets. He is an artful fellow; and if all be true, as wicked as any of us,---and no wonder at it, from the doctrines he preaches. There is a fine story gone all round the country about him, and I'll warrant it is all true.

*Consid.* What is that Sir? I have heard it reported that my wife is too intimate with the parson. Is that the story you have got hold of? But instead of being jealous on that score, I wish her to be yet more intimate. I am sure she cannot have a more excellent and instructive acquaintance; and I now mean to go myself, with her and my daughters, much oftener than I have done; though, being one of the corporation, I am expected at Mapleton Church, more than I could wish.---But pray what is the story?

*Spitef.* Why, have you not heard how *Parson* Lovegood has persuaded a lady to leave her husband; because he would not be converted to his religion, as well as herself; and that she would not live with him, because he was a *carnal man*, according to their *canting* way of talk: while *madam*, with all her *pretended sanctity*, is *carnal* enough to admit the *parson* to come and see her as often as he likes; and there he keeps her at *Ned Swiggs*, at the Golden Lion; and some say Mr. Worthy, with all his religion, is admitted to pay her the same sort of visits; and that Mrs. Worthy is quite jealous upon the occasion.

*Madam Toog.* O shocking! shocking! Well, I always thought Lovegood must be a very bad man at heart, from the first sermon I ever heard him preach; for no one, I am sure, could have made out all people to be so very wicked, if he had not been a very wicked man himself: and from that time, I was determined never to hear him *any* more.

*Consid.* Why madam, I think we had all better

have been at cards, though it is the week before sacrament, than talk scandal against the innocent; but I have heard, from my wife and others, a very different story, to what is now made out.

*Spitef.* Aye aye, they give it out that the lady was the gentleman's mistress; and that, when she saw the evil of her ways, by one of Lovegood's *preachments*, she would not live with him any longer; but he swore again and again by his Maker, that she was his lawful wife, and that he would soon prove it.

*Consid.* You know the old proverb, "they that swear will lie;" and I have no doubt but the uprightness of Mr. Lovegood's conduct will soon appear.

*Spitef.* They may preach up their innocence as long as they like; but Mr. Bluster, of Revel Hall, knows the family very well; and Mrs. Scandal, his aunt, says she could take her oath of it, that it is a fact.

*Madam Toog.* Yes, and she was going to tell me all about it one morning, when she met me at Friday prayers; but I had not time to stop to hear it all.

*Miss Prateap.* Yes, and Mrs. Tittletattle was at our house but yesterday to tea, and told us a great deal about it; I am sure Lovegood must be a very wicked man if it is true.

*Consid.* And I am sure, you are all acting a very wicked part if it is false.

*Spitef.* Faise! how can it be false? are they not always prating and preaching about faith without works, though you pretend to deny it? and what can be expected among those who hold such loose notions of religion? Why to be sure, a conduct as loose as their religion: every body knows it is all free grace with them, that they may live as they list. I am afraid these abominable fellows will soon overturn both church and state.

*Consid.* Why Mr. Spiteful, what can ail you to-night, to run on at this rate?

*Spitef.* Why, have you not seen Bishop Bluster's



Charge against these mock reformers, proving, that under the mask of a great zeal for religion, they are notwithstanding, *Infidels* and *Atheists*?\*

*Consid.* How can you, in your conscience think so, while by Sunday schools, and every possible exertion, these people are doing all they can for the reformation of mankind?

*Spitef.* Fine reformers truly! when under the pretence of a reformation, their design is by their seditious machinations, to throw all things into anarchy and confusion; and the bishop says, this he knows to be a matter of fact. I wonder Government does not stop their progress!

*Consid.* What! is it a matter of fact, that some attempt to make people infidels and atheists, by directing them to read their Bibles, and attend on the public worship of God? And as to the charge of sedition, malice can say any thing, but stops to prove nothing.

*Wiseh.* Bishop Bluster Sir! who is Bishop Bluster? Being a dissenter I am not so well acquainted with the names of the bench of bishops.

*Spitef.* Why Sir, he is not only a man of very *high blood*, for he is cousin german to Mr. Bluster of Revel Hall, but a very learned man, I will assure you.

*Consid.* As for his learning, that I shall not attempt to dispute; but if a person wilfully, deliberately, and publicly, bears false witness against his neighbours, by urging such cruel charges without any evidence to substantiate the fact; while he can thus directly transgress the ninth command, it is no great evidence of his integrity: it will prove a sad injury to the Church, if ever we discover more than one Bishop Bluster, seated on that venerable bench at the same time.

*Wiseh.* Though I cannot altogether like Mr. Lovegood, and greatly disapprove of his *irrational* notions of religion, yet I do not think that either he or any of his

\* It seems, a charge not very dissimilar to Bishop Bluster's, made its appearance about this time.

soc are quite so bad as you make them out to be; he certainly is very charitable in his Parish. I wonder how he can do so much, for they say his living is but very small; and he has an increasing family.

*Spitef.* Ah! but I'll warrant it is Mr. Worthy's purse that helps him out; they don't mind their money provided they can but bribe people to be of their religion.

*Consid.* Why is it then Sir, that you cannot get Mr. Bluster to bribe some people, after the same manner, to be of your religion? for whenever you preach, it seems, yours is but *a very little flock*.

*Spitef.* I do not mind your sneers Sir, but I have not half done yet; for there is Mr. Feigning, Mr. Worthy's steward, *a rascal*; and then I have heard a fine story of Mrs. Fairspeech, *a drunken sow*.

*Consid.* Sir, you need not spend your breath on such subjects: for hypocrites there always were, and will be; but nothing can be more cruel and unjust, than to charge the crimes of hypocrites on those who are upright and sincere.

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Thus Mr. Spiteful was proceeding in his most vehement manner, and after the rate of his *delightful* fraternity, in which he would probably have proceeded for a considerable while longer, had he not been interrupted by his servant, who was sent after him from his house at Mapleton to Mrs. Toogood's, with the following letter:

"REV. SIR,

*Wednesday Noon.*

With great difficulty, I yesterday came from Revel Hall in Mr. Bluster's chaise. On Sunday, after the second service, I went to his house, according to appointment, that I might be present on Monday at the coursing match. My mare, you know, is rather spirited, and every now and then the young sparks that were there, smacked their whips and gave her a

cut; and you know, if we, of our order, choose to keep company with the *great*, we must submit to such rubs as these. However so it was, that while we were all on the full speed, on a chace, my mare with the rest of the company, attempted to clear a wide ditch, but missed her aim, and left me behind. I unfortunately fell head-foremost, and must soon have been suffocated in the mud and water, had not the gamekeeper, with the assistance of others, with great difficulty pulled me out. It was a fortunate circumstance that the bottom of the ditch was so soft, otherwise I must have been more severely bruised by the fall; but I still feel myself so much hurt about the neck and shoulders, that I can scarcely sit up in my bed to write these few lines, to request you to undertake *my duty* for me, till I am recovered; or till the return of my curate, Mr. Brisk, who is gone with Lord Rakish to Gambleton Races, and who has some hopes of preferment from that quarter. I expect him to return in about a week or ten days, when, if I am not recovered myself, I shall release you from all further *trouble*.

I was engaged this evening to give the sacrament to Mrs. Formal, who is not likely to live many days: if you will call upon her, and perform that office for me, you will much oblige, your humble servant,

RICH. DOLITTLE.

P. S. I could avail myself of the assistance of Mr. Goodman; but as I have reason to believe, he has of late had a strong bias in favor of Lovegood's notions in religion, I should be much afraid to lend him my pulpit."

---

Mr. Spiteful having read the letter to himself, exclaims:

Oh poor Mr. Dolittle! he has met with a dreadful



**PARSON DOOLITTLE,  
FALLING FROM HIS HORSE, WHILE HUNTING.**

“ While we were all on the full speed, on a chase, my mare with the rest of the company attempted to clear a wide ditch, but missed her aim and left me behind. I unfortunately fell head foremost, and must soon have been suffocated in the mud and water, had not the gamekeeper with the assistance of others, with great difficulty, pulled me out.”

*Vide Mr. Doolittle's Letter.*





fall from his horse, and he wants me to administer the sacrament to Mrs. Formal, who is supposed to be near death.---What can I do? I must go away directly.

*Madam Toog.* Why Sir, you are not prepared: you can't go away from the card-table, to administer the holy sacrament?

*Spitef.* Well, I cannot help it, I must take it as I find it; I wish I had been at something else.

[Mr. Wisehead, twisting his thumbs one over the other, sat and said nothing.]

*Madam Toog.* But I hope Sir, nothing material has happened to Mr. Dolittle: do stop awhile and tell us before you go: if it is not too bold, I should be glad to know what he says of this unfortunate accident.

*Spitef.* Well well, as the whole of it must soon be known, far and wide, you may take and read the letter if you like.

[The letter is handed to Madam Toogood, and she gives it to Miss Prateapace.

*Madam Toog.* Becky Prateapace my dear, will you read it? My eyes are got very dim, and I don't like to read by candle light. [The letter is read out.]

*Madam Toog.* O, poor gentleman! but Mr. Spiteful, did you not hear of it before you left Mapleton?

*Spitef.* I heard that he had a bad fall from his horse, but nothing of the particulars.

*Consid.* Hear of it madam? I suppose it is all the town over by now. But as Mr. Spiteful had so much to say against Mr. Lovegood, I thought I would have the less to say against Mr. Dolittle; especially as you so much admire him as a Minister.

*Madam Toog.* Why to be sure Sir, he is an excellent man in the pulpit.

*Consid.* A thousand pities madam, if that be the case, but that he should always be kept in it, and never let out again, when he is once found there. In my opinion however, a bad man out of the pulpit, can never be a good man in the pulpit.

*Madam Toog.* I am very sorry Mr. Dolittle should have been so let down.

*Consid.* Why, by all accounts, he has been completely *let down*, and *let down* more than once on the same unfortunate day; for after the Rector was with some difficulty heaved out of the ditch, neither his hat nor wig could be found for a considerable time, as they were both driven or trodden so deep into the mire, by those that helped him out.

*Madam Toog.* Dear Sir, I hope the Rector was not obliged to ride home without his hat and wig.

*Consid.* Why ma'am, as good luck would have it, there was an old woman gathering some sticks, up and down the hedge, and after she had lent a helping hand to scrape off some of the dirt, she next kindly took her red cloak from off her own back, and put it round Mr. Dolittle's head and shoulders: but as for his riding home, that was quite out of the question, for as soon as his mare found herself at liberty, she took to her heels, and soon arrived at her own stable door at Mapleton: and that first gave the alarm to the town, to see the mare return with her saddle and bridle, and without her master. Besides, had she stopped for her master, he was too much bruised to mount her again.

*Madam Toog.* Poor gentleman, how did he get home?

*Consid.* Why, if not in a very creditable, yet as it then proved, a very convenient carriage. It was in a dung cart madam, which happened just then to be employed in carrying dung into some of the neighbouring fields.

*Madam Toog.* O dear! why did they not send to Mapleton for a chaise? or why could not Mr. Bluster have sent home for his chaise? I would have sooner parted with twenty pounds out of my pocket, than that he should have been carried in that manner.

*Consid.* Why madam, would you have had him to have continued trembling and quaking, all over mud and dirt, in the cold, till a chaise could have been

brought? How could they do better, under such circumstances, than put the Rector in the cart, and then drive him home as fast as he could bear it? though to be sure, had he been brought home in a chaise, he would have escaped his second let down.

*Madam Toog.* Dear Sir! what was that? it quite frightens me. Becky Prateapace, reach me my smelling bottle. [The old lady takes a snift.]

*Consid.* Why, you know madam, calamities of this sort seldom come alone; and so it happened now: for the Rector was first hoisted into the cart, and seated on the old woman's bundle of sticks, while she sat on the one side, and Mr. Bluster's servant on the other, as his supporters. Thus he rode to Revel Hall, shivering with cold, and groaning with pain all the time; but through the carelessness of the plough boy, who drove the cart, which was made to tilt the dung into the field, (not having properly attended to the pin,) while they were preparing to heave the Rector out, they were all tilted down together; and what between the groanings of the Rector, and the laughing of the spectators, to see him and the old woman, with her bundle of sticks, and the servant, all sprawling together on the ground, such a sight I suppose, was never exhibited in that yard before.

*Madam Toog.* I am afraid this will make a sad talk about the town, especially as Mr. Dolittle made such a fine sermon last Sunday, proving that our clergy were the successors of our Savior, and his apostles.

*Spitef.* Aye, and all this will be *nuts* for Lovegood, and his *schismatical crew*.

*Consid.* Indeed Sir, you ill know the character of that good man; no person can be more grieved at the improper conduct of the pretended Ministers of the Gospel, than himself; and if all acted as he does, I am sure, the blessed cause of Christianity would not suffer half the jeer and contempt it now sustains, on account of the bad lives of its professors, especially of its professing ministers, however denominated; and instead of a set of people belonging to any church, urging the

foolish boast that they are the successors of our Lord and his Apostles, it would be much more to the point, if they would but preach their doctrines, and imitate their examples. Good and bad there will be of all parties; but these things prove to me, the reality of the Christian dispensation, since nothing but its own native simplicity and purity, could have preserved it in existence, while placed in the hands of such teachers, whose lives are so contrary to its holy designs.

[Mr. Spiteful being wanted at Mapleton, rose up in haste, and sought for his hat and cane. The cane being mislaid, he scolded Madam Toogood's maid, and according to an accustomed expression of his, called upon *the devil*\* to know where it was, and when found, *trudged off* to administer the sacrament to Mrs. Formal, as fit for the office as was another of the same stamp, who was called from a puppet shew on a similar occasion. After this the rest of the company speedily dispersed.

\* A very favourite mode of speech with Mr. Spiteful. See the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, *passim*.

The reader may easily judge from this hint, and from the spirit and temper of the Rev. Mr. Spiteful, who had a deal of leisure time, that he was a very great scribbler for the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, the *Orthodox Churchman's Magazine*, the *Porcupine*, and of late for several other party publications, which I shall forbear to name, and some other publications of the same stamp; and any one may naturally suppose, from the low and scurrilous style of his conversation, that his productions were greatly admired, by all the editors of that class of periodical publications.

## DIALOGUE XVIII.

BETWEEN MR. WORTHY, MR. LOVEGOOD, EDWARD  
AND MRS. CHIPMAN.

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MORE NEWS FROM LOWER BROOKFIELD, PROVING THE  
EFFICACY OF THE GOSPEL ON THE VILEST OF SIN-  
NERS; OR, THE EVILS OF SEDUCTION DELINEATED.

**T**HE Reader may have discovered towards the conclusion of the last Dialogue, that something of an extraordinary nature had occurred at Lower Brookfield, which gave Mr. Spiteful and Madam Toogood an opportunity of further exemplifying their wicked spleen, against the exemplary Mr. Lovegood, and the highly respectable Mr. Worthy: fully evidencing how readily the tongue of slander, can pervert by a malicious coloring, the best of actions, into the worst of crimes.

Edward, the landlord of the Golden Lion, whose conversion was noticed in a former Dialogue, comes to Mr. Lovegood, and begs his advice.

*Edward.* Sir, if I don't interrupt you, I should be glad to lay before you the case of an unfortunate, but I believe, a really penitent young woman, now at our house.

*Loveg.* You know Edward, I am always happy to attend to every circumstance relative to poor penitents.---Sit down, and tell me your story.

*Edw.* Why Sir, you may have heard that a gentleman, (at least by his looks,) took lodgings, at a pri-



vate house in our village, with a very fine gay-looking young woman, and every one thought she was his wife. They came about a fortnight ago to our Church; and a few days after that, she came to our house in much distress, and without the gentleman with whom she lived. This made me think it necessary to tell her, that we were very cautious whom we took into our house, and then pointed her to our rules. She looked at a few of them, threw herself back in the chair, and quite fainted away.

*Mrs. Loveg.* Oh! my dear, how I was struck at her appearance, when she first came to our Church! You no sooner began to preach than she was all attention, and soon seemed almost melted into tears; and since then, though she has come without the gentleman, she has constantly attended; even last Wednesday she was there at the lecture, though it rained so fast. I cannot but hope, that God has sent a signal blessing home to her heart! she appears to me to be exceedingly downcast, and distressed.

*Loveg.* Why my love, you know I have often said, that, independent of the preacher's abilities, nothing is attended with such a glorious efficacy as the simple preaching of the Gospel of Christ. [To Edward.] But Edward, what brought her into these parts?

*Edw.* Why he had heard much of the beauties of the country, and of 'Squire Worthy's park, and that brought him to spend a few days in the village, in their way to Newmarket races.

*Loveg.* Profligates of every rank, are sure to meet in abundance at that place. But you must tell us more of her story.

*Edw.* O Sir! she tells me the most affecting story I ever heard in all my life: how she was seduced from her husband, by the artful wicked man who has brought her into these parts; and as soon as she was convinced of her evil ways, he left her; and she has been at my house ever since, crying and sobbing enough to break one's heart. And when my wife attempts to comfort her, she begins weeping again,

twice as much as before; and says, "You have been a faithful wife to a kind and affectionate husband; but O! what a wicked and ungrateful monster I have been!" She will then ask us if she can do any thing for us, if it was only to work at her needle, stand at the washing tub, or even weed in the garden, as she fears since the gentleman has left her, she shall not be able to pay for her board? as she has but a few shillings left for her support. But with your leave Sir, she wishes she may lay her unhappy case before you, as she much desires your advice.

*Loveg.* With all my heart Edward, but it will be necessary to have other evidence, to hear what she may have to relate on such a story. And I have no doubt but Mr. Worthy, who is always ready for every good word and work, will attend and assist me with his wise and good advice. I will call upon him to-morrow morning, and send you word directly, when she shall attend. But what is her name?

*Edw.* Her proper name, it seems is Chipman, though she came into these parts under the name of Lady Dash: but if ever that name is mentioned to her, she cries, "O! let me never hear of the horrid name of Dash any more."

*Loveg.* Well Edward, to-morrow you shall hear from me again; in the interval present her with this book for her perusal. [Mr. Lovegood gives him "Doddridge's Rise and Progress in Religion in the Soul," and retires.]

[On the following day she was sent for to Mr. Lovegood's. Mr. Worthy attended: the young woman was introduced by Edward, agitated and in deep distress.]

*Loveg.* Come in, sit down until your mind is a little composed, and tell us of your calamities. We wish to shew nothing but pity and compassion, to the truly penitent.

[She falls into strong hysterics, and at intervals cries: O my dear husband, his heart will be broken!---O my lovely forsaken babe!---What a brute!---O my

most dear and tender father!--What a monster!--She afterwards a little recovers, and cries, How can you admit so vile a wretch within your doors? What an ungrateful monster have I been before God and man!]

*Loveg.* But the vilest of sinners may be saved---Be calm; and let us hear the cause of your distress. [After several attempts Mrs. Chipman thus begins her story.]

*Mrs. Chipm.* Ah Sir! I have grieved the best of parents; forsaken the tenderest of husbands; have left my dear babe behind me; and all through the pride and wickedness of my own heart, in suffering myself to be seduced by the worst of men.

*Loveg.* But if you are not somewhat more particular in relating your calamities, I fear it will scarcely be in our power to assist you with our advice.

*Chipm.* Sir, my father, whose name is Reader, was the best of husbands to my mother, the kindest of parents to his children; and a man of strict integrity among his neighbours. He was by profession, a school master, in a small town called Locksbury, in the West of England: and being well-informed himself, he gave me a good education. But his family afflictions have been very severe: for my eldest brother was born an idiot, my next brother took a very wild turn indeed, and my father does not know whether he is dead or alive, as he went abroad, and has not been heard of these five years, and I was the next, and oh! what a wretch have I been?

[She is again, too much overcome to continue her story; after she recovers, she is addressed by]

*Mr. Worthy.* Mrs. Chipman, you may depend upon it, you are conversing with your real friends and advisers. [Mr. Lovegood adjoins]---Yes; and with such friends also as rejoice over you in the depth of all your sorrows; trusting in God, that you are now blessed with repentance unto life.---But continue your story.

*Chipm.* After my birth, it was near seven years

before my mother had another living child ; but her constitution having been broken by different miscarriages, she did not long survive the birth of my sister. Before I was seduced, by that man who has left me to curse my folly, it was my greatest consolation, to alleviate my father's sorrows, and to be my husband's joy. And when but a child, I could in those days, with the greatest tenderness, wait on my dear mother till I closed her eyes in death ; and if all the world had told me, that I should have been such a monster of iniquity ; I could not have believed them !

*Loveg.* Yes ; but then you did not know the deceitfulness and wickedness of your sinful heart : you had nothing proposed to you, which was calculated to draw forth its evil propensities into action.

*Chipm.* No ; nor for some time afterwards could I have believed that I should have turned out so vile a creature. Though so young as I then was, I cannot tell how much I was affected at my mother's death ; and how I wept while I followed her to the grave ; and afterwards how glad I was to wait on my dear father, who would never marry again because his family was already too large ; and what diligence did I then show, though so young, to my poor brother and my sickly sister ;

*Wor.* And what became of your sickly sister ?

*Chipm.* Sir, from her birth she continued in an ill state of health ; grew quite deformed ; and when she was about thirteen years of age, died of a decline. I followed her to the grave, and saw her laid upon my mother's coffin, who had been buried about twelve years before.—After hearing no more than this, surely you will say, I am the most abominable wretch that ever lived upon the earth.

*Wor.* But we wait to hear more of your story ; especially that part of it whereby you were led into your present unhappy situation of distress.

*Chipm.* Oh Sir ! the nearer I come to that part of my most vile conduct, the more I feel myself ashamed to relate it.

*Loveg.* But the more you are ashamed of your conduct, the better we shall be inclined to assist and relieve you.—Tell us the whole without reserve.

*Chipm.* Sir, there lived a young man in our town, whose name was Chipman; he was an early scholar of my father's, and from his attention and good disposition, he much esteemed him. He was by occupation a carpenter and joiner, and having an opportunity to do some business for himself, he again returned to my father for some further instructions in drawing, and arithmetic. It was from that time a connexion was formed between us. After he was somewhat established in business, he mentioned to my father his attachments, and inclinations towards me; and I am sure from the purest motives. I also was happy to confess my real affection towards him.--- O! how it cuts my heart to tell, how my dear father acted on this occasion. He called me his dearest right hand; I was his dear Jemima, the name he gave me; being his only earthly comforter, after all his most severe family afflictions; but, however ill he could spare me from his family, yet as he had no fortune to give me, he would not prevent so good an offer for my future settlement in life; as Mr. Chipman was a very sober and industrious man, and advancing in a good line of business. Soon afterwards we were married. [She again weeps and then adds,] and I shall never, never forget, when my dear father gave me away at the Church, after the service, how he embraced and kissed me; then, how he embraced me and my husband both together, intreating him to be tender and affectionate to the best of daughters, and me to be obedient and loving to the very worthy man that was now become my husband! and O! to treat such a parent, and such a husband, as I have done, did ever such a monster live before?

*Loveg.* But then you were a stranger to those divine principles, whereby the power of corruption can be effectually subdued. You have now been



arrested in the mad career of sin ; and your vile misconduct is become your grief.

*Wor.* By what you have hitherto related, if some parts of your conduct may have been highly culpable, yet we rather feel for you as an object of commiseration than of contempt. But when you have given us a further narration of those circumstances, which have brought you into this present state of embarrassment, we shall be better able to give you our advice.

*Chipm.* O Sir ! there never lived a happier pair than Mr. Chipman and I were. For above eighteen months after our marriage, it seemed to be our whole study to please and oblige each other : and when I became pregnant, he was doubly attentive to make me the happiest woman upon earth ; and how have I rewarded him by my brutal conduct ! I have done enough to send the best of husbands with a broken heart to the grave. [Again her grief is excessive.]

*Loveg.* Let not these exclamations against yourself interrupt your story ; we serve “ the God of patience,” and with much patience and forbearance, we wish to hear you further.

*Chipm.* About a year and a half after our marriage, that artful vile man, Sir Charles Dash, who has an estate in our parts, though he seldom lives there, began to lay his plans for my ruin. He first used to feign excuses to call at our house, when he knew my husband was from home. In the midst of his filthy and frothy conversation, I too often gave him a smile, when I should have turned upon him with indignation and disgust ; though for a while I treated all other familiarities with the abhorrence they deserved. Mr. Chipman, my husband, now began to get into a considerable way of business in the building line ; and was frequently called at a distance from home, to undertake the alterations and repairs of gentlemen’s houses in the neighbourhood ; and for a while, I could count the hours with anxiety until his return ; until I had the folly to suffer that vile wretch to entangle me in his affections, who took every oppor-

tunity to accomplish my ruin, through my husband's necessary long absence from home.

*Wor.* But this accidental circumstance, must be considered as an alleviation of your crime.

*Chipm.* O no Sir!--I should have been disgusted at every word he said. And while I continued for a season, to resist his vile designs, he would laugh at my prudish formality, and ask me, how I could confine myself to be the drudge of a carpenter, when I had sufficient charms to manage the person and fortune of the first man of pleasure in the land? and how deservedly I now suffer for submitting to the disgusting flatteries of this abominable seducer! [To Mr. Lovegood.] O Sir! had I been possessed of the real influence of that religion, which since then, I have heard you preach; the empty flattery of this vile seducer, would never have been my ruin.

*Loveg.* Had you then, no religious impressions to guard your heart, against the horrid purposes of this artful man?

*Chipm.* O Sir! I am sorry to say, they were so faint, that I knew not how, either to answer his flatteries, or resist his importunities; while on every occasion he would treat the religion of the Bible, with the utmost ridicule and contempt.

*Loveg.* Then, to the eternal reproach of infidelity, it seems he ever declared himself to be one of that stamp; and knew that he could never accomplish his vile designs to ruin you and the peace of your family, until he could persuade you that the pure and holy religion of the Bible, was not worth your minding.\*

\* The reading of Sir Charles, was entirely limited to the writings of the modern infidels of the day; from them he had collected the following passages, which he would quote with an air of impious triumph: The God of the philosophers, of the Jews, and the Christians, is nothing more than a chimera and a phantom." He was *fool* enough to conceive, from another Atheist, that "the wonders of nature are far from proclaiming a God, and that they are but the necessary effects of matter prodigiously diversified; so that according to these *fools*, there is infinite wisdom, contrivance, and order in dead matter.

*Chipm.* Sir, he was ever telling me, that the injunctions of a strict adherence to the marriage contract, was nothing but an artful design of the priests, and calculated only to restrain our natural passions, which all had a right to indulge as they chose best.

*Loveg.* And could you give credit, to all this abominable and beastly talk?

*Chipm.* Credit to such talk!---O no Sir! but infatuated by his enchanting promises, and by the splendour of his appearance in life, my ruin was accomplished.---What could possess me to be so beastly and so vile? [She weeps excessively.]

*Wor.* [To Mr. Lovegood.] As this unhappy young woman has told us the substance of her story, it appears to me, that notwithstanding her indiscretion in

In the midst of all his wickedness he would say, "there is no means of knowing, whether there be a God or not: whether there be any difference between good and evil:" and, if God be the author of evil, according to Dr. Priestley, Sir Charles's notions are nearly right; and a Socinian and an Atheist are no very distant relations. And Sir Charles was so near a brute, he could not bear the thoughts of life without his body; he would therefore say, that "the immortality of the soul was a dogma of barbarians, gloomy and disheartening. The only two books on divinity, therefore, he ever read or admired, were Priestley on Necessity, Matter, and Spirit, the latter book brought things so nearly to his own mind, that there was no existence but that which is material; that he found one step further, a denial of the doctrine of the resurrection, would bring them to the same point; that "death is an eternal sleep." He was highly pleased with the philosophy which taught, that "virtue and probity in private life, is but the habit of actions personally useful;" "that our tongues were only given us to hide the real sentiments of our hearts." And he was charmed beyond any thing, at the sentiments of Volney, "that personal interest is the only and universal criterion of the merit of human actions;" and as to all chastity, as it respects the marriage contract, he would say, that "modesty in the female sex was but refined voluptuousness, and morals have nothing to fear from the generous passion of love." Such were the adopted sentiments of Sir Charles; no wonder that a man of his vile principles, was so vile in every part of his conversation, and especially since he passed many of his early days in France.

her unguarded days ; it may not be impracticable to restore her to her former connexions, and to render her future life a comfort to herself and family.

*Chipm.* Sir, it is utterly impossible.

*Wor.* Why should you say so ?

*Chipm.* I shall be eternally ashamed, again to enter a town, in which I must live the contempt, the abhorrence, and the disgrace of all who know me.

*Wor.* Yes ; but when they see you a humble penitent, the compassions of the people will be excited, and the reproach cast upon your character will, by degrees, wear off.

*Chipm.* O Sir ! the cruel way in which I treated that worthy man, to whom I was united, after I became connected with Sir Charles, must for ever, have done away all his former friendship and love towards me ; the union between me and the best of husbands, is now dissolved ; and I am ashamed to bear the name of such a worthy man. And then the soandalous manner in which we were, in a measure driven out of the town, and the disgraceful uproar made throughout the neighbourhood by my vile conduct, shame entirely forbids me to relate. O Sir ! I am completely ruined, and must for ever be abhorred by all that ever knew me ! But if by taking in needlework, keeping a school, or by going out to any sort of labor, I can but earn myself a morsel of bread, for I was always used to an active life, I shall most thankfully and willingly submit to it. Let me now suffer whatever I may ; I am sure my punishment, can never eqaul my ingratitude, and my crimes.

*Wor.* What then, do you think it would be of no avail, if your father should be written to, informing him, that your connexion with Sir Charles is now at an end ? and might he not be a successful advocate with your husband, when he is given to understand, how grieved you are at your past misconduct towards him ?

*Chipm.* I can have no objection, that my dear father and husband should be informed, how much

ashamed I am of my most vile and base behavior towards them. [To Mr. Lovegood.] But dear Sir, if I might, I had rather live on bread and water where I am, than again grieve my dear father and husband by my return; or be removed at a distance from your ministry, by which, through the mercy of God, I have been reclaimed from my most abominable ways!

*Wor.* Perhaps it will be an encouragement to our worthy Minister, if you tell us how your mind was first impressed when you came to Brookfield church?

*Chipm.* Sir, I am ashamed to acknowledge, that it was very little more than mere curiosity, which first induced me and Sir Charles to come to Church: and there was a something in the character of Mr. Lovegood, that I could not but secretly revere, yet I confess, that public worship, had before then, been too much neglected by me; and entirely so, when I became connected with Sir Charles.

*Loveg.* I am afraid then, that a neglect of public worship, was one of the causes of your present misfortunes.

*Chipm.* No Sir, when I lived with my father, and even for some time after our marriage, we attended public worship, if not constantly, yet more regularly than most of our neighbours; but with us, public worship had been brought into very general neglect; for we knew nothing of our non-resident Rector, but as he came upon the business of his tithes; and as for his curate, he was much more noticed for his gaities, than for the conscientious discharge of the duties of his office.—O Sir! had we been blessed with such a Minister as I have found in you, I humbly trust I should not have been given over to such a wicked course! but ah me! I have done the crime that has ruined my happiness, and rendered me completely miserable through life.

*Wor.* I confess, as you sat at no great distance from our pew, I saw you considerably affected, while Sir Charles appeared not a little irritated and dis-



pleased: his behavior, even at Church, seemed to me to be very disgusting and bad.

*Chipm.* O Sir! when I first came into Brookfield Church, I was immediately struck with solemn surprise.—It appeared to me, as though I had never been at Church before. With us, going to Church was nothing but a matter of form, and the few who did attend, seemed to have little more to do than to display their dress, and settle the visits for the week; but as to real devotion, I confess, I never knew what it meant, until I came into your Church. O Sir! how I was struck to see a country village attended on a fair day, by people from every quarter, all occupying their accustomed seats, with so much devotion, decency, and order; and, how I was further struck, when you, and your large family, and that dear worthy man of God, and his family, followed to complete the most devout and serious congregation, I ever beheld with my eyes.

*Wor.* But during the time of divine service, what part of it proved the most impressive upon your mind?

*Chipm.* O Sir! when that awful sentence from the second lesson was read against me, with so much solemnity, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge."---What I then felt, I cannot express; and it is impossible to tell with what an indignant and contemptuous sneer I was treated by Sir Charles, immediately as he perceived my confusion and remorse.

*Wor.* No wonder, that a man of his vile character should treat you as he did, under such circumstances, But was there nothing in the sermon that particularly impressed your mind? For I think, on that Sunday, our Minister, though not knowing your character, was most providentially led to the choice of a text which was remarkably striking, as being so immediately applicable to your unhappy situation. I think the words were these, "Can a woman forget her sucking

child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."

*Chipm.* Sir, immediately as the text was mentioned, I was so remarkably struck, that for a while, in the midst of my confusion, all my recollection failed me; and as soon as I was a little recovered, I heard Sir Charles muttering in my ear the most cruel taunts, and blasphemous invectives, for my weakness and superstition, as he called it. [To Mr. Lovegood.] But O Sir! was it possible for me not to feel, hard-hearted wretch as I have been, when you gave such a character of the monster, who could forsake her sucking child, and when that very monster was then before you? [Mrs. Chipman weeps.]

*Loveg.* We esteem all your tears and sorrows, as a matter of thankfulness before God: while we trust, what you are now led to feel, of the evil and bitter consequences of sin, will prove to your eternal good. But if Sir Charles behaved so cruelly towards you, even when in the Church, I should suppose, when you retired home to your lodgings, his conduct must have been more abundantly cruel and severe.

*Chipm.* O Sir! it is impossible I could meet with more than I deserved: it was fit that I should reap the fruits of my own misconduct. How could I expect to be served better by him, when I consider how I had served my husband, my babe, my father, and my God! But after we left the Church, he first began more in the way of flattery than abuse; wondering that I was not more upon my guard, than to be overcome, as he called it, by the *cant* of a *whining* and an *artful priest*: and that, though I had been exposing him and myself, by suffering my passions to be overcome, by my superstitious reverence for religion; yet he was still inclined to make me a happy woman, provided I would but follow the dictates of *reason* and *nature*, which allowed and directed every one to be happy in the way *they liked best*. O Sir! I am ashamed further to tell you with what blas-

phemous contempt he spoke against the Christian religion; and with what ridicule your character was treated by him, on account of those faithful admonitions, which brought home to my heart, a conviction of my evil ways;---what reason have I to hate myself, and what just cause to fear lest, I should be eternally hated by my God!

*Loveg.* I am thankful to God that you are made to feel the hatefulness of your sinful conduct. But I suppose, Sir Charles soon discontinued his flattery, when he perceived that it was of no avail?

*Chipm.* Sir, I was so affected, that I fell down upon my knees; beseeching him to show compassion to a ruined and most afflicted wretch, who dared not any longer continue a conduct so disgraceful and abominable before God and man. Directly he spurned me from him; swore at me in the profanest manner; treated me in terms the most vulgar and cruel; then called for the servant that waited on us, crying, "See what this d---d religion has done for this superstitious fool; I shall go and take lodgings for three days at Mapleton, and if in that time, she gets rid of her *religious qualms*, she may write a line, and send it up to the George; but if not, I shall leave her to her own superstitious folly; such *whining hypocrites*, and such priest-ridden fools, will never do for me."

*Loveg.* After this, I suppose, you saw nothing of Sir Charles?

*Chipm.* Yes Sir, he came the third day down to our lodgings, and at the sight of him I quite fainted away; and thus he has left me the most disconsolate creature, that ever lived on the earth.

*Wor.* Well, at all events, your father shall be written to; it will be highly proper that the good man should know these circumstances. [To Mr. Lovegood.] Will you undertake the office?

*Loveg.* With all my heart Sir. [To Mrs. Chipman.] But can you give us any further information respecting your situation?

*Chipm.* Nothing Sir, that is material. You know the principal cause of all my misery.

*Loveg.* [To Mr. Worthy.] Then Sir, with your leave, I will retire and write directly, and bring it to your house to-morrow, to see if it meets with your approbation.

*Wor.* Though my approbation can never be wanting to a letter of your writing, yet it will be a gratification to see what you write on this occasion; I will therefore walk home directly, and expect to see you to-morrow morning. [To Edward.] But Edward, you must not let this poor unfortunate creature want; I shall be answerable for all expences, till these matters are settled.

*Edw.* Poor thing! she does not put us to much expence: the grief of mind she suffers, almost prevents her from taking any food. If your honor pleases, I shall be very glad to give her all she wants.

*Chipm.* O what tenderness to such a wretch! this is Christianity indeed! O! that I had known more of such Christianity, before I had been ruined by that wretched man!

*Wor.* But Mr. Lovegood, on an occasion like this, I suppose you will not let us part without offering up a prayer?

[Mr. Lovegood immediately acquiesces, and the following prayer is offered up:]

#### MR. LOVEGOOD'S PRAYER.

O thou God of infinite compassion! we thy most vile and sinful creatures, approach the throne of thy grace, trusting alone in that mercy of thine, procured even for the chief of sinners, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord! We have all sinned against heaven and before thee; and instead of being worthy to be numbered among thy children, we

humbly acknowledge, how justly we might have been given over to suffer the penalties of eternal death; but blessed be God that we have been brought upon our knees in thy sight, that each may cry for himself, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Yea, and blessed, for ever blessed be God, that we are seeking mercy through his atonement, who is "able to save, to the uttermost, them that come to God through him!" And O! most holy Redeemer, thou hast "loved us, and given thyself for us;" thy most precious blood is of infinite value for our redemption! thou hast "put away sin by the sacrifice of thyself!" and thou hast given us the word of thy promise, that "whosoever cometh unto thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out:" and now with weeping eyes and broken hearts, we humbly cry, Save, O Lord, save us for thy mercies' sake! And in an especial manner behold the poor contrite sinner before thee; till now ignorant of thee; ignorant of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of her own heart. We lament, how awfully she has been permitted to fall, by the treachery of a vile seducer, and by the corruptions of her own nature. But lo! the poor penitent now humbles herself before thee, and cries, with indignation against herself, "Behold, I am vile!" And while she thus repents and abhors herself in dust and ashes, as in thy sight, O thou most tender witness of the weepings and wailings of her broken and contrite spirit, fulfil thy promise; let thy free forgiving love be her portion, and mercifully prevent her from being overwhelmed by the miseries and sorrows of her own mind! Heal the deep wounds which have been made on her heart, by the hateful and deceitful consequences of sin! restore her by thy blessed Spirit: imprint thy dear image upon her, and bid her go and sin no more. Let thy most merciful pity be vouchsafed to her disconsolate husband, and afflicted parent. O that her unhappy departure from thee, may be made the providential event in thy wise hands, of bring-



ing them near to thy blessed self, that all of them, being united to thee, may feel the restoration of that endearing union towards each other, which is the happy privilege of all those who have been blessed with thy love, and tasted of thy salvation. Grant this, most merciful Father, alone for thy Son's sake, our most gracious Mediator and compassionate Redeemer. Amen.

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[After this prayer, Mrs. Chipman, as a guilty culprit to the place of confinement, departed with Edward to the Golden Lion; Mr. Lovegood retired to his study to write to Mr. Reader, and Mr. Worthy went home to Brookfield Hall.

## DIALOGUE XIX.

MR. WORTHY AND MR. LOVEGOOD.

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THE STORY OF MRS. CHIPMAN CONTINUED.

**T**HE day following Mr. Lovegood waited on Mr. Worthy with the letter designed for Mr. Reader; this in course, having met with his approbation, was immediately sent by the post to the disconsolate parent of the unhappy Mrs. Chipman. A copy of which I have next to present before the reader :

“ SIR,

“ Though I truly sympathise with you in the grief you must have sustained, by the unhappy elopement of your daughter from her husband ; yet, I can bless our most merciful God, that I have it in my power to relate to you a circumstance, which I trust, will be a considerable alleviation of your distress. Sir Charles Dash, by whom your daughter was most cruelly seduced, thought proper to rest a few days in the pleasant vale, in which our village is situated in his way to Newmarket. During his stay here, I fear no better principle than mere curiosity led him to the Church. In the progress of my duty, being Minister of the Parish, that chapter was providentially read, in which are these words, ‘ Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge ;’ and in the course of my sermon, without knowing any thing of the characters who attended, I made some observations,

which have been so impressed upon her mind, as to produce, I humbly trust, that "repentance which will never be repented of."

"After being thus convinced of her evil conduct, she soon became the object of perfect hatred to the man, by whom she had been so treacherously misled; and he has now most unmercifully left her, a stranger, in a strange country, scarcely with a shilling for her subsistence. Such have been the effects of his brutal love, and such the unhappy state to which your daughter has been thereby reduced. One alleviation however, of her sufferings is, that she is in the hands of those, who having obtained mercy from God our Savior themselves, love to manifest the same to others. A most respectable gentleman, of my Parish, and of an ample fortune, and a liberal mind, has for the present, engaged to supply her wants, and has employed me to enter into this correspondence with you, that we may know how far it will be practicable, again to restore her to her family connections. She has already communicated to us, the principal circumstances of her former situation in life; and while justice demands it of me, I am happy to observe, that it is impossible for any one to discover greater tenderness of mind, or deeper contrition of spirit. She cannot speak of you, dear Sir, but a flood of tears immediately bursts from her eyes, while she execrates her vile ingratitude to the best of parents, and a parent also, whose family afflictions have been so severe. The like character she also gives of her affectionate, and attentive husband; and has not language to express, how she abhors herself, for grieving the heart of one so worthy of her affections, for the sake of another in every point of view, so worthless and vile. Being myself both a husband and a father, I know what I must have felt, had it been my unhappy lot, to have met with such an afflictive dispensation in my family. It is therefore, with the greatest tenderness, that I can sympathize with you. But dear Sir, may I hope and trust, that

it will not be in vain, to request you to bestow forgiveness on your once most obedient, though afterwards ungrateful, yet now truly penitent and afflicted daughter; whose heart is so severely broken, that it truly breaks our hearts to behold her daily and nightly grief: and indeed, she is so completely overwhelmed with shame and remorse for her sins, before God and man, that at times it is a question with us, if she can long survive the sorrows of her own mind. For the sake therefore, of that blessed Savior, whose mercies are so free to the vilest of our poor penitent race, pass by those unguarded hours of your daughter's life; let the principal blame rest upon the head of the vile seducer, and restore to your recollection what she was in her chaster days, when it was the joy of her heart, to shew the most filial obedience, and affectionate attention to a parent she still so dearly loves, and so highly reveres. I confess, I find it is to me a much greater difficulty to decide, how far it becomes me to be her advocate with her husband, as well as with her father. She confesses with extreme concern, the bond of her marriage connexion is dissolved; and she humbly acknowledges, that were she doomed to spend the residue of her days as it were in a state of the most pensive widowhood, it would be the least punishment she deserves; nor can she ever suppose herself again worthy to embrace her dear child, which she unnaturally left, when it still needed the fostering care of a mother's arms.

“ Under these considerations I determined, that it might be the most prudent step, not to correspond with her husband, but with her father, on this most unhappy event; and to leave you to converse with your son-in-law, and then to transmit your answer to this address. I have already mentioned, that almost every circumstance, relative to this unhappy affair, has been communicated to us by her; but an event, about a public disturbance, which she says, originated in her misconduct, and on account of which, she conceives she will be for ever forbidden to

make her appearance any more in your neighbourhood, she has not fully explained. If you think it proper, confidentially to relate the particulars of that event, you may depend upon it, the only advantage I shall take of it will be, to exert myself still further to assist and console, by every effort in my power, a poor unfortunate young woman, originally dear to you, by the purity and simplicity of her affectionate obedience, and now not less dear to me, as an humble penitent, won to God our Savior by the ministry of

“Your unknown friend,  
“and servant, for Christ's sake,  
“BENJAMIN LOVEGOOD.”

*Lower Brookfield,  
near Mapleton.*

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About ten days after the above letter was sent, Mr. Reader returned the following answer:

“REV. SIR,

“I conceive myself unutterably obliged to you, for your very great kindness and attention, manifested towards my unfortunate daughter. No doubt, but you find yourself sufficiently repaid by *the approbation* of your own mind, for the great goodness you have testified on this occasion; while you have still to look forward to a future day, in which you will receive a *full reward at the hands of the Almighty*, for that *uprightness of heart*, you have manifested towards one, that I thought might have been sufficiently guarded from such evils, by the *virtuous principles*, which from her childhood, I conceived it my duty to impress upon her mind. Amidst the deep grief I have sustained at the revolt of my dear child, from the paths of virtue and morality; I am happy she is now convinced of her error; and sincerely pray, that she may abide by the *good resolutions* she has been able to reassume. I at once submit kind Sir,



to the requisition you make on my daughter's behalf. Assure her therefore, that I freely forgive her, and shall again receive her, without the most distant token of my displeasure; as I trust her repentance has proved a sufficient *atonement* for her crimes: and indeed, her former good conduct, before she was seduced by that wicked man, ever gave me such evident demonstration of the *natural goodness of her heart*, that it were highly uncharitable, not to suppose that her repentance is sincere; these unhappy days of her folly and indiscretion, I shall therefore bury in eternal oblivion. Assure her therefore, I shall be much grieved and affected, if the unhappy *fracas*, which she says she is ashamed to relate, should prevent her from accepting this, my affectionate invitation for her return; and as you wish to understand that circumstance, I am free to relate it. My worthy son-in-law, a man of *most excellent natural inclinations*, who had unfortunately too much proof of the evil propensities of my daughter, from her uncivil and unkind behavior, by first thwarting him upon all occasions, and then embracing every opportunity to receive the addresses of Sir Charles Dash, had soon too much reason to suspect his vile intent. He therefore for once feigned a necessary absence from home on his business, and returned at an unexpected hour. By this stratagem, he detected that wicked man in his abominable designs: and not having sufficient property to avenge himself in course of law, can you wonder Sir, if Mr. Chipman should have exceeded the rules of moderation, in the revenge he was excited to take against the man, from whom he had received such cruel injuries? Armed with horse-whips, he and one of his men, by force entered the chamber, where they discovered my daughter and this libidinous wretch: thus armed, they gave him one of the severest flagellations man could well receive. But could it be severer than such a brutal and treacherous conduct deserved at his hands? Being thus driven out of the house, he was

followed with not less severity through the town. He was then thrown into the kennel by a mob of children in the streets, while the people at large eagerly testified their approbation of Mr. Chipman's method, if not of *legal*, yet of *laudable revenge*, in their general out-cry against a man so deservedly detested, as the destroyer of the peace of one of the most happy families in the town. However at length, Sir Charles, with great difficulty, got to his lodgings; soon afterwards he was followed thither by my daughter; they both made an early elopement together the next morning, and after that, what became of them was a matter entirely unknown to us, until your letter was received.

“As with much delicacy, you ask my advice, how far it may be practicable to attempt a reconciliation between my daughter and her husband; so I find as much difficulty in giving my advice. You say, my daughter is so true a penitent, and is now so deeply affected at her past offences, that you have your fears whether she can survive her grief; and it much concerns me to observe, that the revival of her affection to her husband, must be attended with additional grief to her mind, when she is informed, that Mr. Chipman has been so deeply affected at this unhappy event, that he sunk under melancholy and dejection of spirit. This brought on a bilious fever, which for several days we thought might have terminated in his death: and though he is recovered from the most dangerous crisis of the disease, yet I fear, the effects of it he cannot long survive. He has no spirits left; his business he totally neglects; and whenever he thinks of my daughter, or beholds the dear little infant she has cruelly left behind, he is again overwhelmed with grief and floods of tears; and though I and Mr. Fribble, the curate of our town, do all we can to divert him by reading the news, or by an innocent game at cards, I fear, that that detestable seducer will be the death of one, who, I believe, was *naturally* as

*good-hearted* as most that are to be met with in the present day.

"Think kind Sir, what a painful task it was to me, to read your letter to my son-in-law, in a state so debilitated and weak; and though I did it with all possible tenderness and attention to his feeling mind, yet it opened the sluices of his affection beyond what I can possibly express, and it was with much difficulty, that at length he cried, 'Tell my wife I freely forgive her; but though a dying man, how can I forgive the wretch, who has destroyed the peace of my mind, and torn my darling from my bosom!'

"I leave it with you Sir, to break these painful circumstances to my unfortunate daughter, as you may judge best. So far as her conduct has been a grief and injury to me, again I repeat it, I freely forgive her from the bottom of my heart; but from the declining state of her husband's health, I have deferred writing for above a week. I fear he will soon forget all his sorrows, in being speedily laid in the silent grave. He is however, a man *naturally* of a very good mind, and is now endeavoring to fortify himself against that solemn event, by *making his peace with God*, according to the best of his ability and knowledge. I am Rev. Sir, with many thanks for your great kindness and attention to my daughter,

"Your most obedient humble servant,  
"JAMES READER."

*Locksbury, May 15.*

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Immediately upon the reception of the above letter, Mr. Lovegood consulted Mr. Worthy how they should act for the best upon it. They not only had to lament the strange dark conceptions of Mr. Reader's mind, as it respected the knowledge of the Gospel, though in himself a well-intentioned man; but were very appre-

sensive of the effects it must have on Mrs. Chipman's feelings. However, they were both of the same opinion, that the contents of the letter could not be kept back from her, whatever painful sensations might be created thereby.

They conceived also, that a second interview similar to the former, would be more painful to her feelings, under this new circumstance of the dying situation of her husband. It was at length judged best, that Mr. Lovegood should send her father's letter, for private perusal, together with another letter from himself, preparing her for its trying contents. This he wrote with his accustomed tenderness and discretion; considering at the same time, how keenly she must feel, under the painful recollection, that all her sufferings were brought on her, by her own misconduct.

Edward was accordingly sent for, and directed how to act, and afterwards to inform Mr. Lovegood and Mr. Worthy of the result. But he wishing to have some one else in his house, on this occasion, requested Henry Littleworth would be there; who, though once such a profane and dissipated rake, was now the admiration of the neighbourhood, for the wisdom, goodness, and purity of his life. He, with his sister Nancy, immediately came down to Brookfield, that they might be there while Mr. Reader's letter was laid before his daughter: and as the case of Mrs. Chipman was in *some* instances his own, he would naturally enter into her feelings with much tenderness and sympathy of mind. The consequences of this interview will now be presented to the reader, in the conversation which took place at Mr. Lovegood's; where Henry and Edward went to report the result of this event.

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*Edw.* Sir, Mr. Henry Littleworth and I are come to tell you how Mrs. Chipman received the letter.

*Loveg* Well, and how did the poor creature bear it?

*Edw.* Why Sir, at first, as you directed me, I gave her your letter. While she attempted to read it she wiped her eyes several times, admiring your tenderness to such a wretch, as she always called herself. She then said, By the latter end of Mr. Lovegood's letter, I find you have another letter from my father: and when I gave it her, she trembled like an aspen leaf. I then begged her to go up stairs and read it by herself. She had not been long there, before we heard her scream violently; my wife and I ran up, and found her in strong hysterics.

*Loveg.* I was afraid the letter would be too much for her. Her affections having been withdrawn from the *worthless fellow* who seduced her, since the blessed change, which I trust, has really taken place upon her mind, it is no wonder that they are strongly restored to their proper object; and the thoughts of his death by her misconduct, must be like a dagger to her heart.—But how long did she continue in that state?

*Edw.* I believe Sir, it was full half an hour. We desired that Mr. Henry and his sister would walk up, while my wife went down to bring something for her refreshment; and when she seemed a little recovered Mr Henry went to prayer with her.

*Loveg.* [To Henry] Well, and how did her mind seem after prayer?

*Hen.* O Sir! she sat, the picture of misery and frantic grief; calling herself monster, murderer, wretch, and the vilest sinner out of hell. Then I began to tell her that she could not be worse than I was in my thoughtless days; but there was a precious word of promise given for me and for her---“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief.” “No,” she directly cried, “I am chief, and I shall soon have the murder of my dear husband to answer for before the bar of God. O! what a hateful wretch. How ashamed am I of this most polluted soul, and if possible, still more polluted body, before God.”



Thus she went on, exclaiming against herself. O Sir! what misery and mischief has sin brought into the world, and what a mercy that God ever stopped me in my mad ways.

*Loveg.* Yes Mr. Henry, none of us can be sufficiently thankful for the power of that divine grace, which saves from a thousand evils. But could you discover, from Mrs. Chipman's conversation, what were her future designs?

*Edw.* Sir, she could hold no conversation with us whatever. I am afraid she will lose her senses or her life.

*Loveg.* Let us hope for the best Edward. We cannot be surprised at the strength of her feelings, on receiving such tidings respecting her poor husband; the grace of God always restores tenderness to the mind. But this, for the present, makes it a more melancholy event; as almost whatever is said to her, can have no other tendency than to add to her grief; and how to advise her, as to the steps she should take under present circumstances, is a most difficult task. Were she to accept of her father's invitation, and return home; the sight of her dying husband might be the cause of her death also: for thousands of people have been killed by grief.

*Hen.* O Sir! when it first pleased God to awaken me to a sense of my sins, nothing so affected me as the thought, that my vile conduct might have sent my dear parents with broken hearts to the grave.

*Edw.* But Sir, if you could come to our house, and say something by way of comforting the poor creature, we should esteem it a great kindness. We really do not know what to do with her, and she pays great attention to what you say. Till the letter came, about her husband's illness, she began now and then to look a little composed! she took a deal of notice of what you said yesterday was se'nnight in your sermon, as how God could over-rule the wicked purposes of mankind to bring about the eternal good of themselves and others: though sin was not the less abomi-

nable on that account. I dare say Sir, you remember what you said about Onesimus, who was permitted to rob and then run away from his master, that he might be brought to the knowledge of the truth, by the preaching of St. Paul. She seemed to take a deal of notice of that observation.

*Loveg.* Well Edward, if it be your wish, I shall have no objection. I have an hour to spare, and will go with you directly.

[Mr. Lovegood, Henry, and Edward walk to the Golden Lion. In the road Edward observes :]

*Edw.* Sir, I believe I must lay aside public-house keeping. My wife and I think out of our little farm, (you know our Squire is very moderate in his rents) and by making a little malt we can keep ourselves very well, especially since we buried our last poor little girl; we have now but three children left.

*Loveg.* O no Edward, by no means. For as soon as you give over, some one else will be starting up; especially as the turnpike road lies through our village, and then it is probable that nothing but riot and drunkenness will be brought into our parish; and one public house is quite enough for this place.

*Edw.* Why Sir, did you not hear what a riot we were likely to have had at our house, last Tuesday evening, from a set of drovers that came along this way?

*Loveg.* No, not I.—I never hear of riots at your house.

*Edw.* Why Sir, after I had put their beasts into the field, they came into the house, and began cursing and swearing; and as I thought it might answer best to speak to them with as much good temper as I could, as generally that goes farthest with such sort of people, I told them, that our's was a very regular house; and that for the sake of good order, I thought it best, that we should all swear by turns, and that it was my turn to swear next: and thus we should all prove, one by one, where was the good of it, and what advantage comes by it; therefore, for the sake of good

manners, I begged they would stop till after they had heard me swear. One of them, having cast his eyes on what I have painted in large letters over the mantle piece, SWEAR NOT AT ALL, directly said, with a great oath, that he should burst if he was kept from swearing at that rate. I then told them, I would do any thing in reason to oblige them, if they would but oblige me ; and that made them quiet for a while.

*Loveg.* Well, if that was the case, your end was answered, and who knows, what may be the future good effects of such a testimony against their profane conversation.

*Edw.* But Sir, it did not end here. For it seems they had been laying wagers as they came along the road, and they had engaged to spend it in drink before they went to bed : and when I told them, they could have no more liquor in my house, than what was really good for them : for I had not suffered a person to get drunk within my doors for above these seven years ; immediately they began cursing and swearing at me, and abusing my d—d religion, as they profanely called it, in the most outrageous manner. I directly told them, if they did not behave quietly I should go to the gentleman, who was my landlord and a justice of peace, and who would allow none of these doings in our village, and that he would make them pay for every oath they swore. They then began to be so noisy, that I thought I actually should be obliged to send to the 'Squire for a warrant ; but at last, after I had promised them a pint of beer before supper, and two pints after supper, as it had been a very hot day ; provided they did not swear over it, they became pretty orderly, and one of them suffered me to talk to him very seriously ; and I gave him some of the religious tracts, our 'Squire wished me to put into the hands of travellers who come our road.

*Loveg.* This is no proof that you should give up your public house ; but just the contrary ; for had they gone but two miles further, to Mapleton, there I fear they might have made themselves wicked enough ; at

least they were restrained for a while ; and now they have heard something they may remember another day. Besides, I am told, that a great many decent sober travellers have lately found their way to your house, for the sake of the quiet and orderly accommodations they find there ; and where are the people to go to on a Sunday, if you shut up your public house ? I am persuaded you are as much in the way of duty in your public house, as I am when in the pulpit ; and I am sure, your excellent landlord, Mr. Worthy, is of the same opinion. He will never suffer you to pull down your Golden Lion, for a few rubs of this sort.

*Edw.* But Sir, had some of my sober customers happened to have been there : how I should have been ashamed of myself ! and it was but the night before the stewards of our benefit club met at our house.

*Loveg.* Ashamed of yourself—for what ? I am sure, they would never have thought the worse of you, or religion, on that account ; besides, I think I can give you a remedy for this evil, at a very small expence—Wait a few days and see if I cannot.

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[The Golden Lion is a little snug clean place, situated on the brook from whence the village takes its name : it had a nice old fashioned porch before the door. Mr. Worthy immediately contrived a plan to adorn the brook with some weeping willows, and the front of this porch in a captivating tasty style, though consistent with its original simplicity ; making it still more like a neat summer-house, by sending his gardener to plant some honey-suckles and flowering shrubs about the porch, and on the little green before the door. On a tablet on the front of the porch thus adorned, the following lines were soon afterwards painted :

Let the kind trav'ller of a friendly mind  
Step in, and all he wants he here shall find ;  
A grateful welcome and a wholesome bed,  
A peaceful pillow for a sober head.



### THE GOLDEN LION

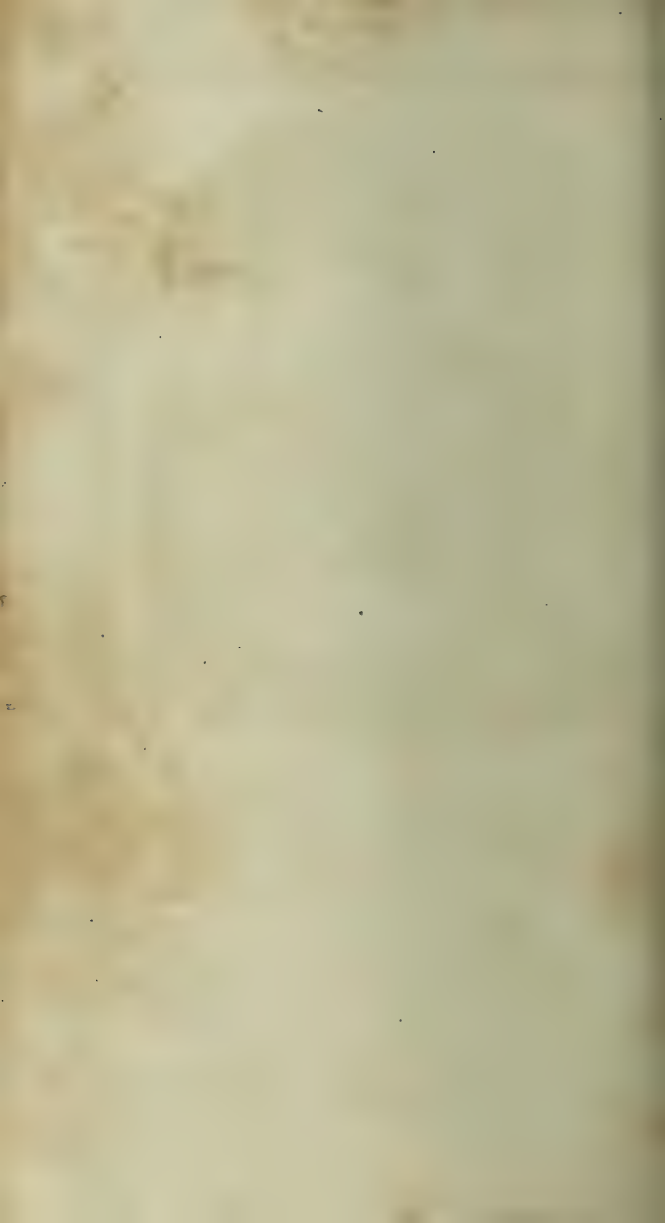
Is a little, clean, snug place, situated on the brook, from whence the village (Brookfield) takes its name. Mr. Worthy contrived to adorn the brook with some weeping willows, and the porch of the house he ornamented in a tasty style, though consistent with its original simplicity, by sending his gardener to plant some honeysuckles and other flowering shrubs by its side; and, on a tablet in front, the following lines were soon painted:

Let the kind Traveller, of a friendly mind,  
Step in, and all he wants he here shall find;  
A kindly welcome, and a wholesome bed,  
A peaceful pillow for a sober head.

While *moderation* makes the mild request,  
He has whate'er he needs before his rest;  
The Hostess waits, with an attentive hand,  
To serve with cheerfulness at his command.

'Tis here the constant law of kindness reigns;  
Her rightful sceptre here she well maintains:  
No sons of midnight riot dare t' annoy  
The sweet repose the weary should enjoy.





While moderation makes the mild request,  
He has what'er he needs before his rest ;  
The hostess waits with an attentive hand,  
To serve with cheerfulness at his command.

'Tis here the constant law of kindness reigns ;  
Her rightful sceptre here she well maintains ;  
No sons of midnight riot dare molest  
The sweet repose the weary find in rest.

'Tis here, Tranquillity and Peace combine,  
To shed their grateful influence all divine ;  
Here Love has fixed her constant fond abode,  
For all who love themselves, and love their God.

Thus adorned by the elegant taste of Mr. Worthy, and the poetic genius of Mr. Lovegood ; stands the Golden Lion, in the parish of Lower Brookfield, situate in a vale which exhibits the most enchanting scenery the eye of man can well behold. While it beautifully opens itself to the south, it is screened from the northern blast by a chain of rocky hills, the most magnificent and wild. Here the meandering stream, which afterwards runs through the village, and adorns the pleasure grounds of Brookfield-Hall, finds its retired channel under a ridge of those rocks, which in many places project in fine bold perpendicular forms, and being covered with an abundance of stately trees, the growth of ages, projecting forward in different points of view, exhibit to your imagination, the ruins of such ancient castles, as might, in former ages, have filled the world with astonishment and surprise.

This part of the scenery has been in the possession of the family of the Worthys for many generations. Other parts of the same landscape belonging to Lord Rakish, are not less enchanting, if less romantic ; all of them fine rising hills, beautifully broken, and richly picturesque. Nearly on the summit of one of them, stands the village of Upper Brookfield, while a variety of cottages are found to rest on different broken brows, adding a pleasing vivacity to the neighbourhood at large.

It is however to be lamented, that this part of the scenery has in a measure been deprived of a share of its original beauties : Through the extravagance of Lord Rakish, created by a life of dissipation, many a fine wide-spreading oak has been felled to the ground, to please the silly fancies of a proud and empty mind. Not so the estates belonging to the family of the Worthys. Throughout several generations, every tree is sure to stand, but as it is cut down for necessary repairs ; and its successors are provided for generations yet to come. Durable as the everlasting hills and mountains which surround them, may the generation of the Worthys long survive ; while it is of little consequence what becomes of the family of such worthless Lords, whose boasted ancestors were perhaps only the mean sycophants of some corrupted court ; and whose conduct is of no better tendency, than to spread contagion in the vicinage wherein they live.

Which of my readers, whoever he may be, after such a description of the situation of the Golden Lion, and its honest occupier, will not thank me whenever he may travel that road, if I recommend him to seek there his necessary accommodations ? There he will find a host truly pious ; a hostess neatly industrious and attentive ! a clean-scoured table, not covered with damask linen, but with a cloth delicately white ; a plain, but plentiful repast, neatly served ; and every other accommodation at a reasonable rate, that any traveller of tranquillity and moderation, and blessed with the fear of God, would wish to enjoy. By this design at the entrance of the porch, no such unwelcome visitants, as before mentioned, now presume to interrupt the guests ; nor is any thing further heard after the door is closed at the evening of the day ; excepting the still voice of reading the Bible and Family Prayer in a back parlour ; while none of the customers are prohibited from enjoying the same privilege with the family, (if they request it,) which they enjoy among themselves. But the reader's attention shall no longer be interrupted from Mrs. Chip-

man's narrative. The conversation started by Edward, was scarcely concluded when they reached the Golden Lion.]

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*Edw.* [To his wife called Prudence.] Well Prudence, how is Mrs. Chipman?

*Prud.* I think she seems a little more composed, though she is very low. [To Mr. Lovegood.] Your servant Sir, she will be very glad to see you; she often talks about you.

*Loveg.* I should be happy to do her any service poor thing, but her situation is so truly perplexing, that I know not how to deal with her: it appears to me as though her life almost depended on every word that is said to her. Is she up stairs?

*Prud.* If you please Sir I'll call her down, as the house is free from company.

[She comes down, faint, trembling, and very hysterical.] After a while, Mr. Lovegood takes her by the hand, and said, My friend, pray for submission and resignation to the will of God.

*Chipm.* [In the greatest agitation.] O Sir, how can you call a *murderer* your friend?

*Loveg.* When you made that unhappy step, you by no means, intentionally designed to be a murderer.

*Chipm.* But had I thought at all, what could I have expected otherwise? What a wretch have I been to break the heart of such a man; O! how I hate myself, and how I deserve to be hated by all who know me.

*Loveg.* I confess there is no reason to palliate your offences; we will admit they are great: and when you continued ignorant of God, and of that power which alone can subdue the pride and passion of the human heart, no wonder that sin was found to prevail, while you were given over to such guides; how could it be otherwise? But admitting the charge against yourself, even murderers are not beyond the reach of divine mercy. How justly might you have been given over to insensibility and hardness of heart;

but now you are brought to your recollection, you feel your folly.

*Chipm.* Yes Sir, and a thousand times worse than folly. O! how it cuts my heart to think, what my dear husband's feelings must have been, before I could have brought him to such a state. What would I give to restore him from the grave, if he should never love me any more. What shall I do? how shall I act? Dear Sir, shall I go directly to him? If it were in my power to walk on foot, every step of the way, how gladly would I take the journey; if each step would but bring me nearer to heal the heart of that worthy man, who is now dying through my most vile and ungrateful conduct.

[She is again extremely affected, while all present join to mingle the tear of sympathetic grief with hers; then she adds:]

*Chipm.* But what is become of my dear child? I hear nothing of him, that innocent miserable orphan. Perhaps by now, it has lost its affectionate father, while it has been forsaken by its brutal mother!

*Loveg.* We have heard nothing as it respects the health or situation of your child; we trust it still lives, and that your mind will be so composed, as that you may live to bring it up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

*Chipm.* O Sir! your text, "Can a woman forget her sucking child!"---

[She again gives way to excessive grief of mind; Mr. Lovegood catches an opportunity, during the intervals of her grief, to add]

*Loveg.* But should you not recollect, how God can bring good out of evil; God we trust, has already accomplished in you the good of repentance, which was *indirectly* brought about through the horrid evil of seduction.

*Chipm.* [After some recollection, a little more calm.] Well, well, if ever I am saved, I shall be the greatest monument of mercy upon earth; but if God forgives me, I never, never can forgive myself.



*Loveg.* There are as great monuments of grace already in glory.---Mary Magdalen, out of whom the Lord cast seven devils, Saul, and many others. Hope for the best. I think I see a plan of good before us, in all these calamities, which gives me reason to believe, that God will get himself more glory by your misguided steps, than might have been the case, had these events never taken place !

*Chipm.* O Sir ! is it possible ?

*Loveg.* Was ever any thing more glorious than what God accomplished, by permitting the base conduct of Herod, Pontius Pilate, and Judas Iscariot, to betray and sell, and crucify our Lord ?

*Chipm.* O Sir ! but these were all wicked, and were punished for their wickedness. And shall I escape ?

*Loveg.* Joseph's brethren you know, meant evil against him ; but God notwithstanding, overruled it for good "to save much people alive:" so that even their evil ways were permitted for their own future good ; and you remember how God brought about matters for the salvation of a thievish Onesimus. Who knows but your father and your husband may be brought to the knowledge of the gospel, by the same unhappy steps, which, under the management of divine Providence, have brought you to Brookfield ?

*Chipm.* O, would to God it might ! I think it is that event alone which will prevent my dying of a broken heart.

*Loveg.* Well, I have a plan before me, that may, by the blessing of God, be the cause of as great joy to you, as present circumstances have made you miserable.---You know how unhappily ignorant your father is, of the way of salvation, made known in the Bible by Jesus Christ. Poor man, he has no other confidence but that of a heathen in his own morality. Now I mean to send him a very serious letter upon this subject, and recommend him to read some such books as may lead him to the knowledge of the truth ; and, who knows what a blessing it may be to his soul !

*Chipm.* And O dear Sir ! do, for the Lord's sake,

write upon the same subject to my dear husband : what good can he get from the visits of Mr. Fribble. Shall I go myself and beg his pardon, again and again, that he may forgive me before he dies, and explain to him the little that I know about the matter, since I have seen my folly, and been made to abhor my ways ?

*Loveg.* I really think you had better leave all this to others. A meeting of that sort, under present circumstances, would be too much for you both. But are there no serious people about that neighbourhood ?

*Chipm.* I remember there were a few people who used to meet in some back room, in a lane in our town, and as they were ridiculed, just as you are, I have already thought they might be good people ; but then my father was very much prejudiced against them, and my husband was entirely guided by him in religion.--- O dear Sir ! what would I give if my father and husband could but meet with some one, who knows about that christianity which has wounded my heart, under a conviction of the evil nature of sin, and has made me to abhor myself for my most abominable conduct.

*Hen.* Sir, I feel so much interested on this subject, though I am so young in grace, yet I could almost venture to say, that I would ask my father if he could spare me to go with your letters and the books. I think Locksbury is not above seventy miles from Mapleton ; I could get there in two days : and our harvest will not come on these six weeks.

*Loveg.* Why Henry, could I leave my charge, I should be happy to go with you ; but if you could be spared, such a visit might be attended with most blessed consequences ; and if your father has not a horse to spare, fit for the journey, I can almost answer for it Mr. Worthy will be very happy to accommodate you with one, if your lameness should not prove an impediment.

*Hen.* I thank God, my hip is much strengthened since I have returned home. I feel very little inconvenience when I ride. I will go home and consult my father, and then I will call on you again.

Soon after this, the conversation terminated with a prayer from Mr. Lovegood. Henry went home to consult with his father about the journey. He was, with some difficulty, persuaded to part with his much beloved son, who was now made so dear to him by the uniting ties of the Gospel, while Mr. Lovegood attended to his engagement, which was, to write a very serious and appropriate letter to Mr. Reader; and to select a few books, such as might be the most conducive to give him a proper view of the Gospel dispensation. And if the reader will but wait till after Henry's return, he may probably hear of some further events, which were the result of this interesting visit. This Dialogue therefore, shall close, by laying before the reader two letters; the one from Mr. Lovegood to Mr. Reader, the other from Mrs. Chipman to her dying husband.

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“TO MR. READER.

“SIR,

“We all feel ourselves so deeply interested in your family afflictions, as to excite us to shew you every possible attention for the alleviation of your distress. By the peculiar wish of your daughter, and by the benevolent assistance of Mr. Worthy; a purpose messenger waits upon you with this, and with some other tokens of our sympathy and respect.

“Mr. Henry Littleworth, the young man who is so kind as to be our messenger on this occasion, though once unhappily of a profane and dissolute turn, is now, by the grace of God, become remarkably serious and devout. This makes him feel more tenderly for your daughter, as her case, is in some respects, so similar to his own. Since he has experienced the converting power of divine grace upon his heart, he has considerably cultivated a good understanding, by reading and serious meditation, upon useful and profitable subjects. To him therefore, I shall refer you, for all you wish

to know, as it respects your daughter's mind, while at the same time, I have no doubt but that you will find him capable of advising with you, as it may respect what future steps should be taken, either upon the death or recovery of Mr. Chipman.

"But dear Sir, with the greatest tenderness, at least as it relates to the feelings of my own mind, I wish to obviate those mistakes, in which you conceive so highly, respecting any applause I can take to myself, or any meritorious claim I can ever make before the bar of a just and holy God. Surely Sir, it is beyond the power of an Angel to give him more obedience than is due to his infinitely holy name; therefore even their perfect services, appear before him as having no *meritorious* claim, when all the ability must first be received from him, ere any service they perform, can be deemed acceptable in his sight.

"Were Gabriel himself to presume to boast, and were the Lord to answer him, "Take that which is thine, and go thy way:" would he not sink into nothing before his God? No wonder therefore, that while they are performing their highest acts of obedience, they are described as veiling their faces, and giving all the glory to Him, who has made them what they are; and who still upholds them by the arm of his almighty power. If then the proud boast of merit be inconsistent even with Angels themselves, what should our language be, when sinners of our depraved race shall be called to stand in his holy presence, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, but with infinite detestation and eternal abhorrence!!!

"Not to depreciate that which may be praiseworthy in you, dear Sir, or in any one else, as it respects our *outward* conduct, between man and man; but surely as it relates to the *inward* state of our minds, before a Being of infinite purity; who can stand when he appeareth? Never was one whose righteous character before man, shone so bright as that of Job; but when his eye saw God; or in other words, when the eye of his mind saw into the nature of the infinite pu

city of God ; with what solemn surprise does he cry, "Behold, I am vile !" And how humiliating was his language, as it farther respected himself : "Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." And the prophet Isaiah was not less surprised, when the Seraphims' voices cried to each other, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts !" Then said he, "Woe is me ! for I am undone." If the most holy and exalted of the saints of God, thus humbled themselves in the dust before him ; instead of our boasting of the *merit* of our righteousness, how much more cause have we to lie in the dust, on account of the *demerit* of our sinfulness.--- If therefore, you will allow me to speak plainly the feelings of my mind on this subject, whatever difference subsists between me and the vilest sinner upon earth, my language must ever be like that of St. Paul ; "By the grace of God I am what I am : " while amidst my highest acquirements, I feel myself a sinner still ; and indeed, in every attempt to serve God, I am sensible I fall short of my duty and of his glory. And though I may not have been guilty of the publican's practice, yet sure I am, I need to adopt the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

"Once, dear Sir, these things were hid from my eyes ; while I was ignorant of God, I was ignorant of myself. But when I began to read my Bible with attention, I soon discovered it was God's own account of a very depraved and fallen race ; and that the sentence of a just and holy law, had pronounced eternal death against all mankind, as "all had sinned ;" and that it was now in vain for me any longer to make the Pharisee's plea, "I thank thee, I am not as other men ;" while I was foolishly "trusting in myself that I was righteous, and despised others : " saying, in the pride of my heart ; "Stand by, for I am holier than thou."

"But what sinner can ever be said to be righteous ? It is not more absurd to say, the guilty are innocent. The law has positively said, "The soul that sinneth shall die ;" that "the wages of sin is death ;" yea, and that "if we offend in one point, we are guilty of all ;"



for it matters not in what point we transgress, as the sentence goes forth by pronouncing, "Cursed is every one that continueth not (during his whole life) in all things written in the book of the law to do them."

"Thus, by the knowledge of the purity and holiness of the Law, the proud notions of merit were soon banished far from my mind; and no other hope was left for me, but the hope of the Gospel; salvation for our ruined race, from his mercy alone, who came to "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." I am now satisfied "that there is no other name given among men, whereby they can be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour." Thus Sir, I had been living on the false hope of a mere heathen, and never knew it, till divine mercy convinced me of the purity of God's law, and the impurity of my own nature.--- While the name of Christ had been sounded in my ears, I had no conception of the need of his salvation in my heart; it was on my own goodness, not on his grace that I fixed my dependance. But now I feel and know that he alone is my peace and salvation; and that without the shedding of his blood, I never can be redeemed from the curse of the law: so that in point of my acceptance and justification before God, I have no other plea left, but his obedience unto death on my behalf. I confess myself a sinner; and while I abhor every comparative idea of merit above others of my fellow sinners, (for we have all sinned and fallen short of his glory,) I trust alone on his mercy for my salvation.

"I was not less ignorant of the nature of that holiness, possessed by every true believer, who is thus "accepted in the Beloved." I mistook decency for devotion, and *morality* before man, for *spirituality* before God. Never till I knew the evil of sin, as a transgression against God's good and holy law, did I desire to be delivered from its inward dominion and power. I now know "I must be born again," or in other words, "be renewed in the spirit of my mind:" and of this I am persuaded, the pardoned believer has no inclination to live in sin, that grace may abound; for he knows, that

being justified by the redemption that is in Christ, he is dedicated thereby unto God, that he may live to his glory. I had not thus dwelt on my own experience so long, had I not conceived, that you also have been unhappily misled from the glorious hope of the Gospel, by the same mistake. I have therefore taken the liberty to transmit to you a few books upon the evangelical, yet not less practical, truths of the gospel; and I am sure, most thoroughly consistent with the articles and liturgy of that church of which I am happy to confess myself a Minister, and of which also I suppose yourself to be a member.

“Though it grieves us all to see your daughter so excessively overcome by the dangerous state of Mr. Chipman’s health, it notwithstanding presents us with a most pleasing sensation, as it respects the tender and blessed state of mind, to which, by the grace of God, she seems most graciously to be restored.

“As the most worthy and excellent young man, the bearer of this, will take an opportunity of consulting with you, on what steps may be necessary to be taken on this unhappy event, I shall shorten this address, by subscribing myself,

“Your real friend and servant, for Christ’s sake,

“BEN. LOVEGOOD.”

*Brookfield.*

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MRS. CHIPMAN’S LETTER.

“My dearest Husband,

“If you can admit a wretch, so treacherous and vile, to address you in such terms, will you allow me to implore your pardon, in the most submissive language? Nothing but guilt and confusion fills my heart, exciting at the same time, tears of the deepest contrition from my eyes; while I thus request you to forgive the worst of women, who has been so treacherous and cruel to the best of husbands, and who has also behaved so unnaturally as to forsake her own offspring. My most dear and injured husband, I could not

have presumed on this address, if I had not been taught by divine mercy, to abhor myself for my crimes ; but as I am now seeking forgiveness of God, I feel I never can be happy until I am favoured with your forgiveness also, though I justly deserve to be abhorred by you, all the days of my life. I am told with inexpressible grief, by a letter from my father, that you are a dying man, through my most hateful conduct towards you. Is it possible for you to believe, after all that has passed, that I speak the truth when I say, I now feel, since a most merciful God has I trust, convinced me of the evil of my most abominable ways, I feel a love to you, if you can believe me, stronger than I ever felt before ; And could I travel a thousand miles to heal a heart that has been so deeply wounded by my vile conduct ; the pleasure I should take in each painful step for such a purpose, I cannot express. Yet consider I beseech you, your once dearest Jemima ; and recollect how happy we were in the chaster days of our connexion ; while I could keep your accounts, post your books, and wait upon you with the most affectionate attention. I cannot tell you how I execrate myself for having forsaken such an office, and for grieving the heart of such a husband. I beg you not however, to suppose I mean hereby an excuse for my crimes ; they cannot be lessened by any excuse whatever. Yet I trust, having received that grace which makes me shudder at my former conduct, you will remember what a poor Magdalen once felt, when she washed our Savior's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. And though I scarcely dare presume to hope, that he will forgive a wretch that has been so vile, yet let me humbly request you to consider, what that most affectionate young man has to say to you, who brings you this letter, and who was not, until a merciful God changed his heart, much less wicked and hateful than myself. O then ! let it be believed, that nothing, in a way of mercy, is impossible with God ; and surely, that mercy is needed by us all, when we

consider what sinful hearts we have before him, who is infinitely holy. Oh! how then shall such a wretch as I have been, appear before him? My only hope is from what Mr. Lovegood, the excellent Minister of the parish in which I now am, has advised me to read, which is still to be found in our old Common Prayer Books, in the lamentation of a sinner.

Mercy, good Lord! mercy I ask,  
This is the total sum;  
For mercy, Lord, is all my suit,  
Lord, let thy mercy come.

“Receive these few lines from your truly penitent,  
and as truly affectionate,

“JEMIMA CHIPMAN.”

*Lower Brookfield, near Mapleton.*

Having thus laid the two letters before my readers, they will naturally conclude, that somewhat interesting may be the result of Henry's return; and as these events will be detailed in the succeeding Dialogues, I hope they may prove not less instructing than any of the former.

## DIALOGUE XX.

MR. WORTHY AND FAMILY, MR. LOVEGOOD,  
AND MR. MERRYMAN.

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THE CHARACTER AND EXPERIENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN  
MINISTER EXEMPLIFIED.

**A**S Henry Littleworth, from a variety of circumstances, was detained some weeks at Lecksbury on Mrs. Chipman's affairs; a detail of other events, during that interval, may not be unacceptable to the reader.

There were a few serious and godly clergymen, about the neighbourhood of Brookfield, who were in the habit of associating together in rotation, at each other's houses, for the purpose of mutual edification in their sacred work. A meeting of this sort, was held at Mr. Lovegood's, during the time that Mrs. Chipman's affairs were in agitation. At these meetings one of the minister's always preached in his turn. This office now fell to the lot of Mr. Merryman; and an admirable and affecting sermon he preached, in some respects not less suitable to his own experience than to that of Mrs. Chipman, from the following text: "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." This sermon was not less grateful to the mind of Mr. Lovegood, than consolatory to the wounded conscience of the unhappy Mrs. Chipman. They say also, that the sermon was blessed to Mr. Gauger,



the exciseman of the Parish, who being himself an ignorant and giddy youth, and having heard that Mr. Merryman was, till of late, one of his own stamp, was struck with his warm and affectionate address from the above-mentioned text, and that he now lives to God, as being himself also "alive from the dead." Mr. Merryman who was supposed to have some secret inclination towards Miss Worthy, continued after this meeting, principally the guest of Mr. Worthy, for some days. A Sabbath intervening, an exchange of labor was mutually agreed upon between Mr. Lovegood and Mr. Merryman, while such a friendly and Christian intercourse proved of equal advantage to both their congregations. Mr. Worthy found himself very happy with such a guest in his house, as his domestic chaplain; and if in deep thought and contemplative religion, he was inferior to Mr. Lovegood, yet he was possessed of a lively zeal, which rendered him a very useful Minister to many of his neighbours, and a most pleasant companion to all who knew him.

Under a sanctified use of his natural vivacity, and constitutional courage, he was ever ready to impress on others the same blessed truths, by the knowledge of which, a change so glorious had been accomplished on his own mind. Thus, while at Mr. Worthy's, he would go round his pleasure grounds, and talk to all his laborers: if he stepped into the stable-yard, or into any of the neighbouring cottages, he would have some instructive hints to drop, or some religious tracts to distribute, that he might leave a savor of the Gospel wherever he went; and this he did in such a cheerful and engaging style, as frequently rendered him very successful in his attempts.

In the days of his ignorance he was light, frothy, and vain; but as soon as he was made a partaker of the grace of God, though he retained all that belonged to his natural disposition, yet he had cheerfulness without levity, and became not less profitable, than lovely and pleasant in his deportment. It

is however, a very supposable event, that persons of such natural vivacity should fall into some innocent mistakes; and an instance of this kind was exhibited by Mr. Merryman, during this visit.

One morning he called at Thomas Newman's, with whose company and conduct he was much delighted: while there, old Susan Dowdy, an honest shoemaker's wife, called in with a pair of shoes for Betty, and with others belonging to the children, which had been carefully cobbled. Thomas being remarkably laborious, could not live without his rest; and being as remarkably honest, he could not rest if he was in debt: while he was therefore preparing to pay the demand, Mr. Merryman very affectionately discharged it for him. Upon the departure of old Dowdy, Mr. Merryman having discovered that she knew something of the blessed realities of the Gospel, mentioned to Thomas, that his next visit should be to see her and her husband. "Ah!" said Thomas, "I believe she is a precious old dame; but it was Dowdy's money made the match." Betty adjoins, "My dear that is nothing to us; all have a right to settle those matters as they like best:" and Mr. Merryman, being frequently a little absent, dropped all further investigation of the subject.

On the next day the promised visit took place. As soon as Mr. Merryman entered the house, he saw an active young man most diligently occupied at his stall; a young woman as industriously engaged in the household affairs; and the notable old woman at her spinning wheel, with the spectacles over her nose, pulling and tugging away as fast and as hard as she could; and her husband's grand-father, sitting in the chimney corner, quite decrepid with age. Alas for Mr. Merryman! he first began conversing with the husband's grandfather, as the husband of old Dowdy; next with the husband as her son, and then with the other young woman as the young man's wife, though she proved to be Dowdy's daughter by a

former marriage. Still supposing himself perfectly correct. The family kept silence, not being willing to expose themselves: and the prayer with which he concluded his visit, was a distinct echo of all these unfortunate mistakes.

On the evening of the day at Mr. Worthy's, he gave the history of his visits: the family knowing the preposterous match which had taken place between old Dowdy, who had an annuity of twelve pounds annually, and her young husband; joined in a general laugh at the expence of Mr. Merryman's blunder,---a blunder not to be corrected by any apology whatever. However, all agreed, that as good men do good, even by their innocent mistakes, it might answer as an excellent reproof to the parties concerned; as all such preposterous matches, are very contrary to that decency and propriety of conduct, we should be careful to maintain in our social and relative connexions through life; especially if we profess to be under the regulation of the pure and holy word of God.

However it will at once be admitted, that such *blunders* were no *blemishes* in the character of one, whose natural simplicity and undisguised integrity, and whose uncommon tenderness and humanity, were of late become so very conspicuous. Still, whatever Mr. Merryman did, it was all done in his own way. A specimen of this was exhibited during his present visit to Mr. Worthy.

On the Thursday after the Sabbath, he went on a little business to Mapleton Market. A bustle was created by the anxiety of a cow, in attending upon her calf, while driven about the market: and in the bustle, a board on which an old woman had placed her oranges, apples, and gingerbread, &c. was upset: a rabble of children attempted to avail themselves of this misfortune, and began a scramble for her goods. This lovely Mr. Merryman humanely considered that her little all was then at stake, and that if she was permitted to be robbed of her slender stock in trade,

the calamity would be deeply felt. Immediately he snatched an oaken stick out of the hands of a gaping peasant who stood by: drove away the unruly mob, and then gave his helping hand to collect the poor woman's scattered commodities, and to replace them on the board. He next gave the clown a sixpence, for the use of his cudgel, who *doff'd* his hat and thanked *his honor* for his kindness; next he gave half a crown to the poor old woman, as much of her barley-sugar was so broken as to be unfit for sale. She then begged leave to reward Mr. Merryman's kindness with one of her best oranges, which he accepted; rewarding her with another shilling for her gratitude, and then departed; she sending after him a thousand blessings for the kind protection she had received in the hour of her distress. Her next inquiry was, who the young gentleman could be who treated her with such kindness, and when she was told that it was Mr. Merryman, the Rector of Sandover, she remarked that she was sure he must be a good Christian-hearted gentleman, that she had heard many people say, that though he was a sad wicked *blade* once, yet of late he had been wonderfully reformed; and that since then, he had become a *brave* man in the pulpit; and vowed she would strive hard but that she would go and hear him. And who knows, the old woman's heart having been softened by this kind event, but that when she was able to put her resolution into effect, the word of life she heard might have become "the power of God to the eternal salvation of her soul?"

Perhaps the reader may judge by another instance of Mr. Merryman's way of doing good, what was the real style and spirit of his character.

He was in the habit of giving an occasional visit to Mr. Meek; and was, as we may naturally suppose, registered among the list of his contributors, that the good man might not suffer a state next to starvation, from the cruelty and meanness of the redoubtable Rector Fillpot.





## DIALOGUE XX.



"Mr. Merryman, within three miles of Sandover, observed a poor disbanded soldier, who could scarcely totter along the road, sustaining the burden of a heavy knapsack, although in a deep decline, and traveling home for parochial relief. The few shillings which were given him upon his discharge were now exhausted: and the weather being warm, he could afford himself no better beverage than a draught of water from a ditch on the road side. While he made this attempt, he fell down and had not power to rise. Mr. Merryman then lifted him up, placed him upon his own beast, and led him to Sandover with the greatest attention and care."

On Mr. Merryman's return from this visit, when he was within three miles of Sandover, he observed a poor disbanded soldier, who could scarcely totter along the road, sustaining the burden of a heavy knapsack, although in a deep decline, and travelling home for parochial relief. The few shillings which were given him upon his discharge were now exhausted : and the weather being warm, he could afford himself no better beverage than a draught of water from a ditch on the road side. While he made this attempt he fell down, and had not power to arise. Mr. Merryman at first supposed he might be intoxicated, as he observed many passing by without taking the least notice of him. However he thought, he would ride up to him, and enquire into the real state of the case ; and as soon as he discovered him to be the object of such commiseration, his heart began to melt: immediately, wiping the sympathetic tear, which was preparing to start from his eye, he placed him upon his own beast, and led him to Sandover, with the greatest attention and care.

If ever humanity rode triumphant, it was on this occasion ; when a youth who, till of late had been so dissipated and careless, having obtained mercy himself, began to exemplify it in such kind abundance to others. Thus, as Mr. Merryman's heart was teeming with compassion, all the time the poor soldier was beholding, with astonishment and surprise, the tenderness and love of his most kind conductor ; while so many others could pass by, without shewing even the most distant inclination to give him the least relief.

As soon as they arrived at Sandover, Mr. Merryman provided the poor man a lodging in a decent public-house, left him half a crown for his present necessities, and promised on the next day to repeat his visit. It was Mr. Merryman's intention to have sent the poor soldier home to his own connexions, in a style more consistent with humanity : but this was soon found to be entirely impracticable ; the

progress of his disease becoming very rapid. However he lived a sufficient length of time, to give good evidence, that he was brought to deep repentance under a sense of the evil of sin, his former life having been dissolute; and he died with an humble confidence in "the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life;" which afterwards he improved in an admirable manner from the pulpit, it is hoped to the good of many souls.

This lovely instance however of humanity exhibited by Mr. Merryman, in having thus turned footman to the poor soldier, made a considerable talk; and bore such an odd appearance, especially in the eyes of the prudish and the formal, though so near a resemblance of what our Lord applauded in the merciful Samaritan, that it naturally subjected him to some ridicule and contempt. Mr. Spiteful said, he always thought him a low mean fellow; and that he was much fitter to be the helper of a groom in a stable-yard, than to mount the pulpit. And it seems Mr. Archdeacon Smooth-tongue's objection was, that it was letting down the dignity of the clerical character; and that it was all affectation, and a sort of *Quixote* righteousness, that all the orderly clergy should be ashamed of; though, it is to be feared, the Archdeacon himself had no better righteousness than that of priestly pomp, while Mr. Merryman's friends and neighbours, well knew the integrity of his heart. All he did, in his free and easy manner, appeared lovely in their sight; especially when they considered the principle of divine grace whereby he was thus constrained to act.

After the above observations and anecdotes, I should suppose the reader might wish to know still more of Mr. Merryman, and how it was that so blessed a change had been wrought upon his mind. The following Dialogue shall therefore give the reader the information he wishes to receive.

The decorations designed for the Golden Lion, have already been noticed: and these having been speedily accomplished, as the spring was now ad-

vancing, Mr. Worthy and family, Mr. Lovegood, and Mr. Merryman, one week-day evening, walked thither to examine their effects; and in order to give proper encouragement to the worthy publican, directed that tea should be brought out, the weather being then remarkably fine and serene, under a large spreading pear-tree. While Mr. Worthy's gamekeeper was directed to bring a casting net, that they might take some trout out of the meandering brook from whence the village is named, for the use of the family, and as a present for Mr. Lovegood: during this innocent amusemint, properly so called, the following conversation took place.

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*Wor.* I suppose you have heard what Mr. Spiteful has reported respecting Mrs. Chipman's affairs.

*Loveg.* Mr. Considerate told me some of his charges, that our designs towards her, were not less criminal than those of Sir Charles Dash.

*Mer.* Well, I should never have thought you would have been charged with such sort of crimes.

*Loveg.* It is of very little consequence what he says, his ravings are too bad to hurt any one but himself, as nobody can believe them.

*Mrs. Wor.* Nor need he have any further chastisement for his wicked spirit, than what he has from his own disposition. When he was in the habit of coming into our house, I used to dread his visits, for he was sure to entertain us with every scandalous tale he could pick up; he would be telling of every one's faults but his own. But directly after we were favored with your visits, we were soon released from his.

*Mer.* I remember, a very intruding chap in our neighbourhood used to come and visit my father oftener than he liked, and he discovered that he had a peculiar aversion to the smell of toasted cheese: in order therefore, to get rid of his impertinent visits, the cheesetoaster was sure to be set at work.

*Wor.* There was no need of a cheese-toaster when you were with us; he would be off like a pistol.

*Miss Wor.* What a blessing to be delivered from such a disposition! May it not be said that what fits for hell, in a measure is hell.

*Loveg.* Indeed it is; and if we expect any other heaven, than what is found in love, we know nothing of heaven. How wonderfully God suits our punishment, to our crimes! I suppose no people are so tortured as those who are possessed of such satanic minds.

*Mr. Wor.* I was delighted to hear you urge so strongly the necessity of these tempers. "Be kindly affectioned one to another, in honor preferring one another." I am surprised that any should suppose themselves to be christians without them.

*Mer.* Before I knew any thing of the power of divine grace, there were seasons in which my hasty tempers would get the upper hand of me. But---

*Miss Wor.* [interrupts] I don't like to hear you charge yourself on that score; if you were once dissipated and wild, I never heard that your tempers were bad.

*Mer.* I am ashamed when I recollect, for near two years after I was ordained, what a disgrace I was to my profession. I do not know that my tempers led me to be spiteful, malicious, and sulky, though at times I was hasty. I was entirely captivated by other evils: a more thoughtless dissipated creature, never lived upon the earth.

*Wor.* Why I am afraid Mr. Merryman, you never were in the way of good, till you heard Mr. Lovegood at the visitation.

*Mer.* Indeed Sir, from my childhood, I never had any thing placed before me, but what was calculated to feed the corrupt propensities of my heart. My poor father had but a small fortune, with a large family: and though he was in the law line, he did not get much by his profession: for there were too many lawyers in our town; and they were in general



such greedy sharks, that they stuck at nothing; so that people thought it necessary to submit to any thing, sooner than employ a lawyer.

*Wor.* I am afraid then you had but a bad example at home.

*Mer.* I cannot recollect that there was much outward immorality practised in our house, excepting that my father was much given to swearing; and he never went to Church, and my mother very seldom.

*Loveg.* How then did your father spend his time on a Sunday?

*Mer.* Mostly in his office, and in his business. He did all in his power to avoid the expence and trouble of keeping a clerk.

*Loveg.* Then was there no outward sign or ceremony kept up in your family, from which you might gather the existence of a God?

*Mer.* It grieves me to say, I was bred up in perfect ignorance. We had not even with us the decent form of asking a blessing over our meals.

*Wor.* Then how came your parents to think of breeding you up to the Church, as it is called?

*Mer.* O Sir! though it was my father's design to have educated me in his own profession; yet from my infancy I never could fix on any thing. And the dry study of the law was so contrary to my natural inclinations, that my father could never get me to submit to it at any rate. While I was *fagging* at the office, I would make any excuse to go and shoot the sparrows off the pease and fruit in the garden. In the summer I would run away and shew all possible tricks and fancies as an expert swimmer and diver; and in the winter, during a hard frost, he could never keep me off the ice; while I was as proud and vain of my ability as a skaiter, as I was gratified and pleased with the admiration of the spectators.

*Wor.* But it must be acknowledged, these are among the more innocent of the diversions of youth; though it is a difficult matter to correct young minds in the excess of them. and when the inclinations

are captivated by them, no wonder if such should be given over to an idle and dissipated frame of mind, all the days of their lives.

*Mer.* I don't know that I first pursued these pleasures with what may be called an immoral design : but from the unguarded levity of my mind, I soon found that this disposition grew up with me ; and that I was entirely captivated and overcome by them : so that after I was ordained, I am ashamed to think, how much more I was wedded to my sports, than to the Church. And though I did all in my power to put on a little decency, in not running after them quite so eagerly on a Sunday as on a week-day ; yet notwithstanding the day, if I heard of a hare, or a covey of partridges, being near my house, I was sure to be after them. And as for skating, I was no sooner out of the church, than I was on the ice. And I remember one Sunday, while I was skating, an old gentleman, who was a justice of peace, who is since dead, sent a constable after me, begging that I would not break the Sabbath, but set a better example to my parishioners. As for other idle amusements, such as cricket matches, hunting and coursing, I was at all times a ringleader in these sports. And after I had done with my out-of-door diversions, the rest of my time was sure to be spent at a playhouse, or in a ball or billiard room, or at a card table. Even such a low paltry amusement as a puppet-shew, a country wake or revel, would captivate my attention, and draw me aside. I am quite ashamed of myself, to think how giddy and foolish I have been. In short, I was captivated by every vain amusement but those of cock-fighting, and bull-baiting ; these abominable exhibitions of cruelty, even at that period, were very disgusting to me.

*Wor.* But did it not strike you that hunting, and especially horse-racing, were but very little less cruel than bull-baiting, or cock-fighting ?

*Mer.* Yes, thoughts of that sort would at times occur ; but it was in my heart to “run with the mul-

titude to do evil :” and I have since experienced, that we know nothing of the real tenderness which possesses the Christian, till the living power of Christianity has been communicated to our hearts.

*Loveg.* Then you must have been sadly out of your element when you got into orders.

*Mer.* Indeed I was, excepting when I turned soldier ; and got a captain’s commission during the war. And when the salutary advice of the Bishops came out against us, to support, by our conduct and advice, our excellent civil constitution, but not to turn our black coats into red ones, I confess I very much disliked it. For nothing but worldly motives was I sent into the Church, and while I hated my black coat, I hated equally my contemptible inconsistency all the time I wore a red one.

*Wor.* Alas ! how much is it to be lamented, that matters of such infinite importance should be given over into such hands ! In this instance, what man did as evil, God has overruled for good. But you have not yet told us, while you were in such a thoughtless state, how you came to think of the Church.

*Mer.* Indeed Sir, that never was a thought of mine. But when my father and uncle, who had the family estate, were together, he used to *swear* (tho’ I never liked his reprobate language) that I was so thoughtless and inattentive, that I should never get my bread by law, physic, or trade ; and that I should be fit for *nothing but a parson*. My uncle therefore promised him, that if he would send me to the University, as he had two livings belonging to his estates, he would give me one of them, provided none of his own children chose to take orders. And as all my cousins were much fonder of the sea and army than of the Church, I was obliged to submit to the penalty of being *turned into a parson*, for the sake of a living. And when the living of Sandover became vacant, my uncle gave it to old Mr. Mumble, who was between seventy and eighty years of age, and in bad health, on condition that I should be his curate ; and I had

not been his curate above nine months before he died, and then my uncle presented me with the living.

*Mrs. Wor.* I thought it was common to put Ministers into possession of livings, on condition of a resignation.

*Mer.* Yes, but my father, as a lawyer, knew that no law whatever could compel any Minister to resign his living, if he choose to keep it; so he supposed that was the safer way.

*Wor.* What terrible merchandise is made of the souls of men by such a traffic; and how ruinous is it in its consequences to real religion in the Church!

*Mer.* I am sure this had nearly proved my ruin; for after this matter was determined upon, I was to be *packed* off to a public school, where every thing like religion was as much out of the question, as it well could be, excepting that we were all compelled to go to Church on a Sunday.

*Loveg.* When I received the first rudiments of my education at the free grammar school at Beachly, we had never the least intimation given us, even in a formal way, about religion; but in my time, I found it much worse at the University, than at Beachly.

*Mer.* I am sure the state of too many of the Clergy can never be wondered at, when we consider the method of their education for the ministry;—though in those days, I was so loose and wild, that I thought nothing about the matter.

*Wor.* Why I thought our universities were in general repute; and that all who applied might avail themselves of an excellent education: at least I found it so when I was there.

*Loveg.* Sir, your remark is perfectly just; but I am sorry to add, at least as it was in my days, leaving religion out of the question. You are frowned upon if you are over righteous, or over wicked; but as to real spiritual religion, though I confess I am but a poor judge how matters then stood, yet I fear it is very little thought of. However, I remember that there were some reproachful sneers circulated against a few,

that since then I have heard were really serious ; but they were obliged to keep themselves very close, “ for fear of the Philistines.” But I must confess, that though I was kept correctly *moral* and attentive while at college, yet I knew nothing of real *spirituality*, till about three months after I was curate of Abley.

*Mrs. Wor.* I think Sir, you have told us before now, that the first serious impressions you ever felt, where when you began to try to make your own sermons.

*Loveg.* Though I had my qualms when at College, that all was not right, yet Madam it was in a great measure so ; for as I was accustomed to make the exercises for the boys at school, and was frequently occupied in the same way at the University, I thought after all this, it would be quite scandalous for me to go about to buy, beg, and borrow sermons, after I was admitted into orders.

*Mrs. Wor.* Dear Sir, as your coming into these parts was such a blessing to our family, and many more besides ourselves, if you don't interrupt Mr. Merryman we should be glad if you would proceed on a subject so interesting to us all.

*Loveg.* Why madam, when I began to try to compose my own sermons, it came into my mind, that I should make them somewhat like the Bible. The Bishop, when he ordained us, said we should not always be preaching mere moral essays ; but that at *times* we should dwell on the evangelical truths of the Bible.

*Wor.* Well Sir, that was good advice.

*Loveg.* It proved excellent advice to me : for it immediately set me on the study of the New Testament : but alas ! I soon found the spiritual eye was wanting, whereby spiritual truths alone can be discerned : for as to many things I found in the gospel, I had enough to do even to make them out ; but when I came to the epistles, I soon discovered myself to be quite out of my depth, as the few pre-conceived



notions I had of religion, seemed to be entirely contradicted by them. And when I had procured some of the fashionable commentators of the day, such as Whitby, Locke, and Zachary Pearce, formerly Bishop of Rochester ; all I got from them confused me but the more ; as it always struck me that the comment contradicted the text, and that instead of explaining matters, they seemed to be explaining them away. Some things were to be confined to primitive times, and others restricted to the Christians, as just coming from under the Jewish dispensation ; and much of the Bible was to mean next to nothing, because it was figurative and metaphorical ; but when I came to look at Zachary Pearce's comment on that striking passage, "One thing is needful : " notwithstanding all his learning, that completely did for him in my esteem.

*Wor.* Why, what did he make of it ?

*Loveg.* That one dish was enough for supper.

*Wor.* Is it possible ? what a strange letting down of such a fine expression !

*Mer.* Yes, and I remember with shame, in our different carousings with each other, in our profane mirth, how we used to laugh at the interpretation, by saying, neither one dish nor one bottle would be enough for us.

*Loveg.* Well, well, I bless God, I could get no satisfaction from these lame interpreters ; for with all their learning, they appeared to me to be so inconsistent with themselves. And one evening, how was I struck, when seeking for a text ? my eyes were fixed on those words of St. Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians—"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." For a time I could make nothing of the expression, till others, very similar, forcibly entered my mind, about being "crucified with Christ ;" being "dead and buried with him ;" and of our "being risen with him ;" and then that passage in our church catechism, as it relates to what is required of all baptised Christians, "a death unto sin, and a new birth

unto righteousness." It struck me, that I had been directed to instruct children in a doctrine which was unknown to my own heart, and that I was a "blind leader of the blind." At that moment I fell down on my knees, and wept excessively; and prayed, I think from the bottom of my heart for the first time, that I might not presume to continue to be the pretended instructor of the ignorant, while so ignorant myself.

*Wor.* I suppose after this, the tenor of your preaching was immediately altered.

*Loveg.* Sir, the change was still gradual. I knew I was wrong, but I did not know how I could be set right. But herein the providence of God wonderfully favoured me.

*Mer.* I have often heard you explain the nature of our conversion from sin to God; but I never heard you explain so particularly the nature of your own conversion.—I wish you would proceed.

*Loveg.* When I first came to my curacy, I was told that five or six people went regularly, Sunday after Sunday, to hear the Rev. Mr. Slapdash, who has a small living in those parts. You know he is an animated bold preacher, and is attended by a large congregation; and I never could hear but that his zeal is tempered with prudence; and that he is a good man: and that, though he has a strong, rapid, hasty way of expressing himself, yet what he delivers is entirely consistent with the sound truths of the gospel. Still their absenting themselves from the church gave considerable offence to the pride of my heart, not knowing that it was my ignorance which drove them at a distance.

However one Sunday, these young men, contrary to their usual custom, stopt at home to hear me. It was soon after that text of scripture so impressed my mind. Ignorance of my Bible, and consequently, unfitness for my office, intermixed with other workings of corruption, from the pride and anger of my

heart, on account of my dark preconceived notions in religion, having been so contradicted by the word of God, affected me not a little. In this state of mind I was obliged to preach as well as I could ; and I remember I was remarkably low and affected, on the Sunday these young men stopt to hear me. And while I was preaching, I saw them nodding and smiling, first at me, and then at each other, in such an uncommon manner, that I could not conceive but that they meant to be laughing at me all the time for my ignorance ; especially as it was reported, that the man they went to hear, was quite a madman : and upon this I went the next day, to converse with them on what I conceived to be their odd conduct at church. My mind being much perplexed, and my spirits very low ; and having determined to speak to them with much mildness ; I no sooner began to open my mouth, but tears started from my eyes, I told them they should not have laughed at me before all the congregation, on account of what they thought of my ignorance, for that I did my best ; and that I hoped and prayed to God, if I was not right, he would set me right.

*Wor.* Well, and what effect had this upon the young men ?

*Loveg.* O sir ! The good young men were as much affected as myself, at my misconceptions of them. They told me that their smiles and nods were the effect, not of sneering contempt, but of approbation and joy ; for they were now fully persuaded that I should soon become a faithful Minister of the gospel : and that they never went to church while young Mr. Wanton was the curate, yet as they saw me so different from him, and as it was reported that I was likely soon to be mad with melancholy, they thought I might be under some serious impressions respecting the state of my soul : and if I continued to preach as I had done, they should soon discontinue hearing Mr. Slapdash, though he was a very powerful

and lively preacher, as they called him, and a very good man.

*Wor.* Then you discovered that these young men were truly serious and good.

*Loveg.* Yes, and two of them I found to be useful and profitable companions to me, having good understandings, which they had well improved by reading among themselves various religious authors. And I was much struck before we parted, at the great modesty with which they expressed themselves, wishing I would but read some of their books which they read among themselves, that they might have my opinion how far I approved of them. They then shewed me their little library; and one of them particularly requested me to read the Pilgrim's Progress, with very precious notes; which they said, by way of recommending it, were written by a very learned man, and which I was the more willing to do, as I remembered reading it as a novel when a child. Among other books, I saw they had Brown's self-interpreting Bible; and as I began to be entirely sick of my old commentators, I begged to borrow it. This they very readily consented to; so I put the Pilgrim's Progress in one pocket, and Boston's Four-fold State in the other, and went home; and when I took my leave of them, I was very much surprised at their humble and affectionate farewell; following me with a thousand blessings, and thanking me most cordially for my visit. Soon afterwards I found one of them at my heels with Brown's Bible, which they wished me to keep as long as I chose.

*Wor.* Well, this was a kind Providence. But how did you seem to like your new authors? did you much admire their choice of books for you? The Pilgrim's Progress, I confess, is an inimitable drama, and beautifully describes the state of the real Christian in his spiritual progress; yet Bunyan, in the general way, happens to be the humble treasure of divinity in the poor man's cottage; and I fear is not so

often to be found in the study of a contemplative divine.

*Loveg.* Sir, if God had conferred on me the honor of being the author of the Pilgrim's Progress, I should have been tempted to be the proudest man upon earth. However, the simplicity and affection of the good people I went to see, led me to cast my eyes over that book a second time, very much to my profit. For on the same day I shut myself up in my study, and began to read. Page after page, my attention was arrested: and as I pursued the subject, light continued to break in upon my mind, while it brought me upon my knees again and again. I now began to see, somewhat clearly, the plan of the gospel salvation alone by Jesus Christ. Every paragraph I read was intermixed with a tear of thankfulness and surprise; and night after night, I was happy to be sleepless, that I might pursue the pilgrims on their road, as I now began to find I could travel with them, while every step appeared plain before me.

*Wor.* It is lovely work, when we can read and meditate under such a frame of mind. I remember how I used to hate to read the Bible, merely because I could not understand it; but as soon as I could enter into its meaning, I found no book like it. I recollect, some time ago, in the library at my house, I laid my hands upon a book written by Bishop Patrick, called the Parable of the Pilgrim, but I found it a heavy performance.

*Loveg.* Yes Sir, I have heard of it. It is a large lumpy volume, though the Bishop was a serious and respectable man; yet while Bunyan keeps you awake, Patrick lulls you asleep.

*Mer.* It seems then, that the Tinker, was a wiser man than the Bishop.

*Loveg.* Why no man gets either brains or grace, by education or title: many gifts of this sort we may receive as the gifts of the God of nature, or of providence; but a sanctified use of these blessings,



comes only from the God of grace. Bunyan was certainly a very eminent man in his plain way. Once it seems, he was very profligate, but afterwards not less serious : and though he had none of the advantages of education, yet he was possessed of a very good natural understanding, a deep knowledge of the word of God, and of the human heart, and at the same time very rich and chaste powers of invention. Such was the character of the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress* ; and, to the last moment of my life, shall I bless God for that book.

*Mer.* But if this formerly wicked tinker became so good a man, and such an excellent preacher and writer, is it not to be lamented that some of our present preachers were not turned into tinkers, provided we could get such another set of tinkers to be turned into preachers ?

*Wor.* I perceive Mr. Merryman will be Mr. Merryman still. But we interrupt Mr. Lovegood in his story.

*Loveg.* Why, I bless God, that I immediately found myself not less charmed with my Bible, than with the *Pilgrim's Progress* : its glorious contents began to open surprisingly to my mind, and the truths which before displeased me, I not only could receive without controversy, but with supreme approbation and delight.

*Mrs. Wor.* You have also told us, what great advantage you received from Mrs. Goodworth, after you became acquainted with her ; perhaps Mr. Merryman does not know that circumstance.

*Mer.* Who was Mrs. Goodworth ?

*Loveg.* She was the aged widow of a Dissenting Minister ; and when I first came into the parish, I was told that she was such an ill-natured, cross-grained, dissenting bigot, that she would sooner see the church pulled down than enter within the doors. But a few days after my visit to the young men, they went and informed her of the result of our conversation, and the next Sunday, to my great surprise,

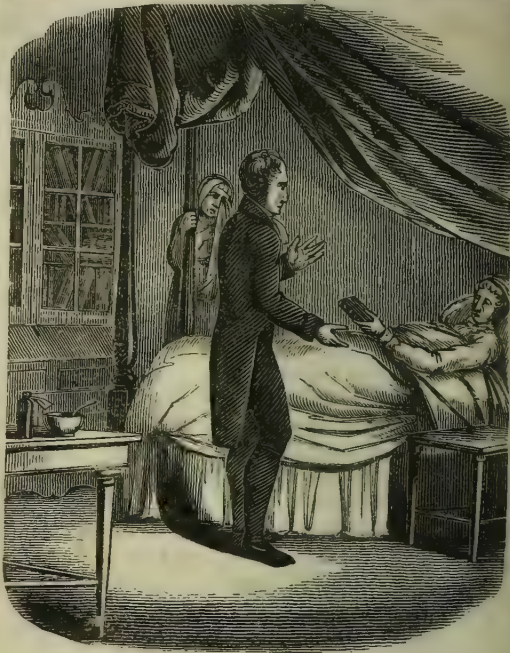
I found her added to the number of my congregation; and as much delighted and affected as the young men were, the Sunday before. On the Monday I thought it my duty to return the visit. I found the old lady nursing her grandchildren: she took me into a little back parlor, and immediately burst into tears of joy, telling me, that through the straitness of her circumstances, she was obliged to live with her married daughter; mentioning how much it had affected her, having been under the necessity of leaving the means of grace, by living at a distance from the meeting where her husband preached; and that since she could not go after the gospel, she humbly trusted that in answer to her fervent prayers, the gospel was now sent after her: that she never kept from the church out of bigotry, but only because she feared Mr. Wanton, my predecessor, was very impure, and consequently a very improper man to administer the word of life to others: being himself "dead in trespasses and sins;" but that now she not only meant to come to church, but to sacrament if I would permit her. She then asked me to go to prayer: this was new work to me, and put me to the blush. However, as I had lately in private found my way to a throne of grace, I did not refuse, though if it had not been for shame I should rather have put that office upon the old lady: as I am sure I needed her prayers for my growth in grace, and for my increase in divine knowledge. The next time the communion was administered, she was with us at the table; and I well remember, when I gave her the elements, how affectionately she looked up at me, and wept so plentifully that she even bedewed my hands with her tears.

*Mrs. Wor.* What a sweet proof this was! of the loving and uniting spirit of the gospel, among all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity.

*Wor.* I have no doubt, but your acquaintance with the good old lady, was very profitable.

*Loveg.* Yes sir; and still more so, as I got ac-





**DEATH OF MRS. GOODWORTH,  
THE AGED WIDOW OF A DISSENTING MINISTER.**

*Mr. Worthy.*—I have no doubt but your acquaintance with the good old lady was very profitable.

*Mr. Lovegood.*—Yes, Sir, and still more so, as I got acquainted with her library, for though she had sold some of her husband's books, yet others of them she had preserved. Among them I found some of the writings of Owen, Flavel, President Edwards, Gurnall's *Christian Armour*, &c.: and when she found herself in dying circumstances, she gave me several of them as keepsakes.

*Mr. Merryman.*—The loss of this good old lady must have considerably affected you.

*Mr. Lovegood.*—Yes; but then her death was so glorious. On my last visit she cried, "This is not dying; believers never die; I am just going to enter the presence chamber of my Lord." And then she sang, with peculiar melody of heart, that verse from Dr. Watts:

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,  
On thy kind arms I fall,  
Be thou my strength and righteousness,  
My Jesus, and my all.

quainted with her library : for though she had sold some of her husband's books, yet others of them she had preserved. Among these, I found many of the writings of Owen, Flavell, President Edwards, Gurnall's Christian in complete Armour, Archbishop Usher on the Sum and Substance of the Christian Religion, Bishop Downham on Justification, Bishop Hall's Works, and others. These she used to call her Sunday company ; and to these I had at all times free access : and about three years afterwards, when she found herself in dying circumstances, she gave me several of them as keep-sakes.

*Mer.* The loss of this good old lady, must have considerably affected you.

*Loveg.* Yes ; but then her death was so glorious ! On my last visit she cried, " This is not dying ; believers never die : I am just going to enter the presence chamber of my Lord." And then she sung, or rather attempted to sing, with peculiar melody of heart, that verse from Dr. Watts, (whose hymns she frequently quoted in her last sickness.)

Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are ;  
While on his breast I lean my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

Then she paused and said, taking me by the hand affectionately, here I lie, just going to glory ; and then repeated another verse :

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,  
On thy kind arms I fall ;  
Be thou my strength and righteousness,  
My Jesus and my all.

Then she would cry out, " O ! this precious believing in the Son of God !" " Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him ;" " He hath loved me, and given himself for



me;" and "he sheds abroad this his most precious love in my heart;" and "I feel it like a warm coal of living fire, while I am struggling in the cold arms of death." Thus she went on, blessing and praising God, and triumphing in the redeeming love of Christ, to the latest moments of her life; repeatedly saying, "O Death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" O Sir! it is a glorious sight, to see believers departing in the triumphs of faith, and with "a hope full of immortality."

*Wor.* No doubt, but that your acquaintance with all these good people, proved a considerable help, though they were inferior to you in point of *educational* knowledge.

*Loveg.* Yes; but I found myself much inferior to them in point of *experimental* knowledge. No earthly wisdom, however good in its place, will do as a substitute for "that wisdom which is from above." But I soon got acquainted with two very excellent clergymen in those parts, and with a worthy dissenting minister, whose name was Peaceful; and who was in the habit of calling on Mrs. Goodworth, though they all lived at some distance from us.

*Wor.* We should be glad if you would tell us how that was brought about.

*Loveg.* Why Sir, the next Sunday, only two of the young men attended the church, and I suspect they went over to Mr. Slapdash; for about a fortnight after, I received an anonymous, though an affectionate letter, signed "*Paucis inter Clerum*,"\* mentioning their exceeding joy on the report which had been communicated to them, declaring at the same time, that they sought my acquaintance from the purest motives of Christianity, and from a desire of cultivating the most affectionate intimacy with all the spiritual and evangelical Ministers of their own community. Interwoven in this letter, there was a great number of very strong and animated expressions, warning

\* From a few among the clergy.

me against the fear of man; and charging me to preach the gospel and the gospel only, faithfully, and directly to the sinner's heart and conscience, as far as divine light broke in upon my mind; so that it immediately struck me, that Mr. Slapdash was the principal composer of the letter.

*Wor.* Well Sir, and there is no doubt but this proved a gracious circumstance in your favor.

*Loveg.* Sir, it proved a gracious circumstance indeed: for I immediately wrote an answer to their truly affectionate letter, and a few days after, Mr. Slapdash came over to my lodgings; and how the dear man rejoiced over me to find me in such a frame of mind! Indeed, all things considered, he proved the best, and most suitable companion I ever met with. You know I am naturally timid; Mr. Slapdash is altogether Lutheran and bold, yet not less loving and affectionate; and though, perhaps every word he advances may not be within the severer rules of moderation, yet I believe that his bold strokes, and *wild notes* are more serviceable for the good of his neighbours, than all the fine *set music*; we may have about the country besides.

*Mer.* How long Sir, did you continue in that curacy?

*Loveg.* Not much more than four years: for when I began to be serious, and to preach the salvation of Christ, my Rector was soon informed of it, and wrote me several letters on my "new notions of religion," as he called them, which brought on a long epistolary correspondence. But when he heard that I had preached a funeral sermon on the death of Mrs. Goodworth, and that I walked with Mr. Peaceful, as a brother Minister, to the grave, his patience was quite exhausted, and he gave me warning to quit.

*Wor.* Why, where could be the harm of that?

*Loveg.* Sir, my Rector had imbibed all the strange, wild, high-church notions of Mr. Daubeny and others, in such an extravagant manner, that he supposed I had been guilty of the most enormous crime,

in preaching a funeral sermon over one that had received schismatical baptism, and had lived in schism almost all the days of her life.

*Mer.* Why, did not your preaching bring her back again to the church ?

*Loveg.* Yes, but all that operated against me : he supposed me to be at least half a schismatic myself, since such a set of schismatical people ran after me. And again, he had heard from the neighbouring clergy, that I drew away people from their regular attendance at their own parish churches : thus, for having a full church, and for bringing Dissenters to the communion, I lost my curacy.

*Wor.* I am afraid that many others of the clergy are much more worthy of the blame charged on you ; who, by their false doctrine and improper conduct, drive churchmen to be dissenters by thousands.--- But though you have often told us what a painful dismissal this was to you, when you were compelled to leave a congregation so seriously impressed, and being also the first-fruits of your ministry ; yet it proved a happy event for us.

*Loveg.* Sir, "God's ways are not as our ways." What man designs as evil, he frequently over-rules for good ; and I bless his name, I was not sent there but for gracious purposes. For after I had been in my curacy about three years, I thought it a call in providence, that I should marry the sister of one of the young men who visited me, and who was a creditable farmer's daughter, having a small freehold of his own ; so that I got in the parish of Abley, two of the greatest blessings in life, a good wife, and the knowledge of the gospel.

*Mer.* It is a great mercy, when we can leave all things in the hands of God : "he doeth all things well."

*Loveg.* In many instances I found this to be the case ; for being thus dismissed from my curacy, the pity of many was excited towards me ; though from that hour to this, I never could discover who it was

that represented my case to the notice of the Chancellor, when I received the presentation to the vicarage of this parish. All I know is, that a short kind letter was sent, asking me the question, that as the Chancellor had heard of my character and situation, he wished to know if the living of Lower Brookfield would be worth my acceptance. I was happy to embrace the kind offer immediately. Our first child was born about three weeks before this event took place; and just when we began to harbor unbelieving fears, about how we could subsist upon our scanty income, this merciful event in providence took place.

*Wor.* Alas Sir! the living of Brookfield is still but a scanty maintenance for yourself and family.

*Loweg.* Why Sir, my curacy was but sixty pounds a year, so that the living of this parish has above doubled my income, besides the privilege of being independent in the discharge of my duty, which was never the case while I was curate of Abley. My Rector was always saying, that I was feeding my own vanity, in affecting to be more abundantly zealous than others; and as this sort of conduct indirectly reflected upon the rest of the clergy, who were contented to do no more than what was regularly expected from them, he could by no means allow his curate to do more than others.

*Mer.* Ah Sir! it would have been well for me, if my living had been no better than yours; but as it is, I suppose, above four times the value, I found myself quite at liberty to run after that which I liked best. Thus, from the income of my living, which I received for *spiritual* purposes, I could procure for myself all that my *carnal* heart could wish to enjoy.

*Wor.* Well Sir, you now know the worth of the gospel since you have felt its power; and when our hearts are converted to God, we shall dedicate our property to his glory. But there is a sad inequality in church preferment, and that is frequently sadly disposed of.

*Mrs. Wor.* Now Mr. Merryman, we shall be glad to hear you again. You have told us enough of the worse part of your story, but nothing of the better: will you next favor us with the latter part of your narrative? No doubt but that it will be much more pleasing than the former.

*Mer.* Why madam, there has been with me so much of the bad, and so little of the good, that I am sorry to say, you will soon hear all I have got to advance on that subject: though I must relate, to my shame, more of the bad, before I tell you any thing of the good.

*Mrs. Wor.* Had you then no serious impressions before you heard our minister at the visitation?

*Mer.* Madam, till that time, I was acting as the vainest *puppy* that ever lived; always affecting the easy air of the conceited gentleman, and as much ashamed of my professional character as I well could be; yet I by no means found myself happy in my light frothy state of mind.

*Loveg.* No wonder that you were ashamed of your professional character, while you acted as you did.

*Mer.* Yes, but while I was engaged in my office, many a stinging conviction was brought home to my mind: for while I was reading the prayers, and acknowledging sin, in language in itself, so humble and just, saying that "I had done those things which I ought not to have done, and that I had left undone those things which I ought to have done, and that there was no health in me;" and that "God would not despise the sighings of a contrite heart, or the desires of such as are sorrowful:" I used to think what profane mockery and hypocrisy it all was. How I was ashamed of myself, when I considered what people must think of me, while I was reading such prayers, and leading such a life!—But in nothing was I more disgusted with myself, than by the frequent petitions I was obliged to make use of for the grace, and influence, and inspiration of God's Holy Spirit; especially while I used to hear many of the clergy, who were



no better than myself, ridicule every idea of divine influences; and when I also had in the bundle of my sermons, that I had either bought, borrowed, or begged, three that were designed to expose such pretensions to divine operations as being nothing better than downright enthusiasm. In short Sir, I could neither bear my office, nor bear myself on account of my office; and no one can tell what I used to feel, when I was under the necessity of administering the sacrament, and how I used to dread and hate the return of those days, when I had to repeat these words, "the remembrance of our sins is grievous unto us, and the burden of them is intolerable;" my conscience would tell me, that I was uttering before God an *intolerable lie*, and was about to take the sacrament with this abominable lie in my mouth. Then again, I was forcibly struck after the administration, while I was obliged to use these words; "And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls, and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee;" that directly after I had been receiving the sacrament, I repeated the crime by mocking God with another lie; for that I knew in my conscience, I had no design whatever to devote myself to the glory of God, but to continue the same loose, wild way of living as before.

*Loveg.* It is really astonishing, that we can mock God by repeating such solemn words, and even on a sacramental occasion! But had you many who came to the sacrament?

*Mer.* Very few Sir; very few indeed: and when I used to see some of these grave old people come with their Week's Preparation books, I wondered what they could think of me, who had been running after all the vain amusements within my reach throughout all the week; if they had any reflection, I am sure they must have concluded that I was nothing better than a mere *hireling* and a *wolf*.

*Loveg.* How did you use to feel when you were called to visit the sick?

*Mer.* Ah Sir ! it was but seldom that the people thought it worth their while to send after such a giddy, dissipated youth as I then was. On these occasions they naturally concluded, that prayers, merely said from the lips of such a light frothy chap, could be of little avail in the solemn moments of their dissolution. But whenever I had an office of that sort to perform, no one can tell how I abhorred the task. However, I used to take out *my little black service-book*, read a few prayers over as fast as I could, and then off again to my sports. I remember once, I had the misfortune to be called to this office from the card-table ; I accordingly put the deal in my pocket, and went to my hated task ; and while I was taking out my book and my handkerchief, all over perfume, to prevent the offensive smell of a sick chamber, (for I had a deal of affected delicacy about me,) I whisked out all the cards, while the nurse had to pick them up again---and then I went to my devotions !

*Wor.* It is a great mercy, that the wickedness and enmity of your heart did not prevent your giving a serious hearing to Mr. Lovegood, when he preached the visitation sermon.

*Mer.* Sir, in all my levity and wickedness, while I could join with others in skits and jokes against real religion ; yet I had a sort of secret respect for those who were truly serious and consistent : I was convinced their characters were preferable to mine. My principal mischief arose from a light, trifling, and frothy spirit, by which I was entirely captivated ; till my heart, I trust, was instructed to know somewhat of the grace of God in truth.

*Loveg.* Well, I bless God, being of a more studious turn of mind I was kept from the same excess of vanity ; nor could I bear the company of the more dissolute of the rest of our body : but if more decent, I was not less ignorant of the way of salvation revealed in the Bible, than yourself ; and in our neighbourhood there lived another clergyman, known by the name of Mr. Soberman, who was very correct

and chaste in the whole of his deportment: we still keep up a very friendly intercourse with each other; though he always told me I had gone too far. I am satisfied of this; we should ever speak well of good wherever we find it; and I should be happy, if in every country, and in every line of life, men of such characters were more universally to be found. It would be horrid indeed, if all the clergy were equally dissolute and profane.

*Mer.* O Sir! it fell to my lot to be acquainted with a sad sample of the worst men of every character. Some of these were professed libertine Deists: and among the clergy themselves I found some Deists in disguise. But what can be expected from the church under present circumstances? You know Sir, at the time of our public ordinations, near the Universities, what scenes are exhibited, when a set of such thoughtless youths take upon them this most sacred office. If the world knew half our tricks, how they would hate us for our hypocrisy, and how should we be treated as imposers on the credulity of mankind.

*Wor.* I confess, all who truly love the church, cannot but lament how ill she is served. But what was it that so impressed your mind, while you heard Mr. Lovegood preach his visitation sermon?\*

*Mer.* Why Sir, when we heard that Mr. Lovegood was to be the preacher, as we had been informed of his character before, we were all attention; some out of envy, and others out of curiosity, and a few perhaps out of good will. But as I so hated myself, on account of my office, I thought I had no right to blame others, whose lives were more consistent than my own: so I confess, I attended not only without any prejudice, but rather with a strong prepossession upon my mind, that I should hear somewhat, well worthy of my attention; for I was persuaded Mr. Lovegood was a much better man than myself.

\* It is the general custom, that some new Rector or Vicar lately inducted should preach the Visitation sermons.

*Loveg.* [To Mr. Worthy.] Sir, as we have done tea, if I am to be made the subject of conversation, I shall withdraw and desire Edward to take away his tea equipage, and sit a little while with poor Mrs. Chipman. I wish to put these few sheets into her hands, [he reads the title page] “The Tempestuous Soul calmed by Jesus Christ.”

Mr. Lovegood having thus withdrawn, the present dialogue shall be concluded, that the reader's attention may have time to rest before he hears more of Mr. Merryman, and of the gracious influences of the gospel; which wrought so wonderfully on his mind, and which produced such pleasing consequences on his ministry, and on the whole of his life and conversation.

## DIALOGUE XXI

THE CHARACTER OF THREE SORTS OF MINISTERS, REPRESENTED IN CONTRAST WITH EACH OTHER.

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MR. WORTHY AND FAMILY; MR. LOVEGOOD,  
AND MR. MERRYMAN.

**B**EFORE Mr. Merryman favors us with a farther narration on the subject of his experience, perhaps it might not be unacceptable to my readers, were they to be advertised, that there were two other ministers in the same neighbourhood, of names nearly similar to that of Mr. Slapdash before mentioned, Mr. Slopdash, and Mr. Taplash. The character of Mr. Slapdash has sufficiently appeared from the preceding dialogue. Mr. Slopdash would frequently boast that he was of the same family with Mr. Slapdash; but, by all accounts, the relationship was very distant indeed. It is charitably hoped that Mr. Slopdash was a good man. But while Mr. Slapdash had a mind, warm and animated, the other was vehement and rash, and would insult his hearers with gross personal reflections, which were too frequently administered with great indiscretion; and this he called *faithfulness*. Mr. Slapdash could also give hard *slaps* when needed; but in general, they were administered with discretion; and if at any time, through the natural rapidity of his constitution, he failed, yet being possessed of the "meekness and gentleness that was in Christ," his mistakes were soon corrected: if at times he tripped through the rapidity of his mind, he never fell into the mire through the prevailing impurity of his heart.



Mr. Slopdash had a mind that was naturally low, vulgar, and coarse. The sentiments of Mr. Slapdash, on the contrary, were elevated and pure. If ever he descended, it was like the swallow, just to dip the tip of his wings in the stream, and again ascend. But Mr. Slopdash was quite the duck; he could go down into the filthy kennel of human corruption, and turn it up from the very bottom, and then glory in his performance. Mr. Slapdash, after he had taken his text, would for a while stick to it; and give it a very just and correct interpretation, though afterwards, from the warm and animated frame of his mind, he would branch out so as to surprise his hearers, by a brilliancy of thought, peculiar to himself. His severer hearers would blame him for these eccentricities, and call him a rambling preacher; though still he was correct in his divinity, and well intentioned in his design; and in all his ramblings he was ever sure to *to keep upon holy ground*.

Mr. Slopdash, on the contrary, when he had taken a text, would not so much consider its *sense*, as its *sound*; and would conceive himself wonderfully clever if he could hit upon a meaning, the most preposterous and absurd, by way of explaining a passage the most perspicuous and plain. He once vociferated for an hour on this text: "Behold, says Pharaoh's baker, I had three white baskets on my head." Gen. xl. 16. and from hence he proved the doctrine of the Trinity, whereby he astonished his auditory not a little, and pleased them hugely; for they never heard before, that the three baskets meant the three persons in the Trinity!!!

He also proved nearly the same doctrine from the history of Esther; that Ahasuerus was God the Father, that Mordecai was God the Son, that Esther was the Church, and that Haman was the Devil. As to myself, I rather doubt the justice of the interpretation: for, if we abide by it, that the Devil was hung, upwards of two thousand three hundred years

ago, (though he certainly deserved it,) it is impossible to suppose that such a wonderful deal of mischief could have been done ever since, by a *dead devil*. While it is not less surprising that upwards of five hundred years after his execution, he should have been represented by Paul as being all alive, and full of activity, going about seeking whom he may devour. It is however, charitably to be concluded, that the defects of Mr. Slopdash were not in his heart, but in his head. His brains were unfortunately very ill *screwed* together, though had they been screwed too close, certainly many of his floating ideas would have been terribly *cramped*; but as it happened, matters with him were in a very contrary extreme. No wonder therefore, that this shatter-brained divine, should by the rattling and lax state of his tongue, evidence so strongly, the loose state of his brains. Mr. Slopdash was driven, with others of the same mind, into this wild way of interpreting the Scriptures, not only in the above instances, but in a variety of others, equally as absurd, from having admitted too slight notions of the necessity of the practical and preceptive part of the Word of God. Hence he had almost run into the abominable idea, urged by some *Ranters* of late and modern times; that "the law is no rule of life to a believer:" but his mind was not altogether so vitiated as to admit a doctrine, so grossly blasphemous against the holiness of God. He appears evidently vindicated from this charge, even from the fanciful absurd interpretation he gave of the following text: "He that loveth pleasure, shall be a poor man, he that loveth wine and oil, shall not be rich." Having thrown aside the common-sense interpretation of the passage, as directing us to avoid sinful pleasures and extravagant indulgencies, he insisted upon it, that the pleasure there meant, was the pleasure of true godliness, and that being a poor man was to be understood as being "poor in spirit;" and that loving wine and oil, was to represent our loving the spiritual blessings of the gospel, and that such people

should not be rich in their own esteem.—Such was the *spiritual nonsense* that flowed in large abundance, from the *pate* of this shatter-brained divine.

However there was another Mr. Slopdash, not far distant, a baseborn offspring of the same family, equally as ignorant, but of a much worse disposition: with him neither Mr. Lovegood, nor Mr. Merryman could keep up the least possible connexion, as his doctrine had, at all times, a secret tendency to prove his hatred to holiness; and his life was no better than his doctrine, while his spirit and temper were as bitter as wormwood and gall. This therefore, rendered him a very dangerous preacher indeed, for while he pretended to be such a staunch friend to the doctrine of Christ, he was a dangerous enemy to the mind of Christ, while many were found, being as ignorant as himself, eagerly to swallow down his insulting dogmas, as if they were consistent with those pure and holy truths which are revealed in the Word of God.

He once exemplified his horrid art in thus perverting the scriptures, while he made a preachment from these words: “Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.” He actually misconstrued this holy word of caution, or rather prophecy, given by our Lord to his presumptuous disciple Peter, into an express command, “Thou *shalt* deny me;” and thus proved that the law could not be a rule of life to a believer!!!

I was told also, on another occasion, he exhibited on this text: “It is better to dwell in a corner of the house top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.” First, he insisted upon it, that the Proverbs are not to be considered in a *moral*, but a *gospel* point of view.—That the *brawling woman* was the Law; and that dwelling in the corner of the house, meant being shut up in the Church: and there the Law could not *brawl* at us, as all in the Church were in a justified state: but they who were living in the *wide house*, he represented as living in the wide house of the world, and that they would hear

the *brawlings* of the law, *scolding* them for their wickedness. So that *this* Mr. Slopdash had no idea of the wickedness he was guilty of, in giving such a view of the just and holy law, by comparing its most righteous sentence against our unrighteousness, to the *brawling* of an angry woman. From the same bad principle, this same Mr. Slopdash would also insult the minds of all chaster hearers of the Gospel, by telling them, that we should not perplex the souls of the elect, by preaching up more holiness than God designed they should possess; because "sin could do the believer no harm," and that when the apostles said, "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," he meant without Christ no man shall see the Lord, which is a solemn truth, though designed by him to cover a most vile antinomian conclusion against the necessity of personal holiness on the souls of men.

If I have not already exhausted the reader's patience, he shall have some further evidence how this man could pervert the wise book of Proverbs, into language the most preposterous and absurd; for thus it seems, he was in the habit of interpreting what Solomon says of the four things that disquiet the earth: "A servant when he reigneth;" that is said he, when we who once were the servants, slaves to the law, reign with Christ. "A fool when he is filled with meat," that he interpreted as meaning, when we fools are filled with their sort of heavenly food. Perhaps it would have suited as well had he said that it meant himself, when his gaping admirers gave him a good dinner for talking nonsense. "An odious woman, when she is married," he says, was designed to represent the marriage of the odious sinner to Christ; and "A hand-maid, when she is heir to her mistress," was to mean how we sinners are made heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ!!! spiced with their *indirect* meaning of the passage, that though the devil may reign in our hearts on earth, we may reign with him in heaven. I am satisfied, after all these instances from the abovesaid Mr. Slopdash, respecting

his method of interpreting the scriptures, he will be quite contented if I suppress others, some of them being even indecent, and all of them as absurd and preposterous as any of the former. And indeed the other Mr. Slopdash, who was known to Mr. Lovegood, soon tried his patience till it was quite exhausted; while Mr. Merryman, for a long time, attempted to convince him of the impropriety and absurdity of such interpretations of Scripture. But as there is a certain degree of pride and positivity belonging to the whole of that tribe, all Mr. Merryman got, was the pity of Mr. Slopdash, who always conceited his own ignorance was superlative wisdom, and that the wisdom of others, was to be imputed to their ignorance.

Through the sides of Mr. Slopdash however, the Rev. Mr. Taplash, minister of a little, gay, gossiping town, in that neighbourhood, called Clack, would make his most vehement attacks against Mr. Slapdash; and indeed, against every other minister who with unaffected simplicity, and godly sincerity, preached the gospel to the consciences of his hearers. These he would charge as being all alike, supposing that the follies of some were equally imputable to all; and though he was a man of no great consequence or worth, but in his own esteem, yet where truths are naturally disliked, any sort of a witness will be readily admitted against them.

Elegance of composition, and a genteel delivery, were all that Mr. Taplash could admire, which he thought were wonderfully accomplished in himself, while he was dealing with all possible affectation, his flimsy, flippery, unsentimental harangues, as a very acceptable treat, to those who could be gratified with empty sounds, and a mere parade of words.

The Orator, when he first made his appearance, would be primmed and dressed up in the most finished style: not a hair would be found out of place on his empty *pate*, on which the barber had been exercising his occupation all the Sunday morning, and powdered



till as white as the driven snow. Thus elegantly decorated, and smelling like a civet-cat, through an abundance of perfumery, he would scent the air as he passed. Then, with a most conceited skip, he would step into the pulpit, as though stepping out of a band-box ; and here he had not only to display his elegant production, but his elegant self also ; his delicate white hand, exhibiting his diamond ring, while his richly-scented white handkerchief was unfurled, and managed with remarkable dexterity and art. His smelling-bottle was next occasionally presented to his nose, giving different opportunities to display his sparkling ring. Thus having adjusted the *important* business of the handkerchief and the smelling-bottle, he had next to take out his glass, that he might reconnoitre the *fair* part of his auditory, with whom he might have been gallanting, and entertaining with his cheap talk, the day before : and these, as soon as he could catch their eye, he would favor with a simpering look, and a graceful nod.

Then next to his *devotions*. These were performed in a remarkably *gentleman-like* manner ; though the best of it was, that they were no sooner begun than they were ended. The same may also be said of his sermons, they were special short, fifteen minutes being the full length of the sermon of a fashionable divine ; and this he rarely exceeded ; while the ingredients of all his compositions, seemed to be nothing better than flimsy declamations, and religious compliments. He would be talking of “the reward we were to receive, from the fair hand of our own virtuous conduct, which, at a very easy rate, we might secure to ourselves, as our religion by no means secluded us from innocent amusements ; (doubtless referring to the card-table, the ball-room, the theatre, &c.) “ which we were all permitted to enjoy, in order that we might return to the service of our Maker with a greater relish and delight ; and it is reported, that he once actually composed a prayer for a *reli-*

*gious* young lady, on her confirmation, after she had discharged her god-fathers and god-mothers, from that vow on her behalf; “to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh!” which she was to say after her return from these exhibitions of vanity and pride.

Mr. Taplash would also, at times, adorn his harangues with scraps of poetry, principally culled out of Shakespear’s plays; and at one time, after a very tasty specimen of his elocution, in which he had been displaying the rich repast conscious virtue brought home to the pious mind, he thus concluded, with the following verse out of Thomson:

“Come, then, expressive silence, muse *her* praise.”

The orator stood, as all astonished at the excellency of his own harangue; gave a very elegant *congee* to his auditory, and then most gracefully sat down. But the circumstance which flattered his vanity, beyond all others, was that of his being appointed as the preacher at the consecration of a church, to which a public charity was connected; and on which occasion he flourished away in this most extraordinary manner.

“Such is the foundation of a Temple truly christian. Let us gratify the mental eye with a transient survey of the figurative superstructure. I look up with admiration at the broad expansive arch of charity; the massy columns of truth; the graceful capitals of mercy, gentleness, and compassion; the whole compactly cemented by piety and philanthropy, by a cement of goodness and love, intimately blended and tempered in a perfect, inseparable amalgamation. If it be asked of what architectural order is the fabric? it is neither the Tuscan, the Doric, the Ionic, nor the Corinthian, but it is the composite Christian order; more beautiful in its form, and more durable in its materials, than the most celebrated productions of classic antiquity, modelled in the polite schools of Athens or of Rome; and is finished with a *grace* which they

could only, at a distant interval, faintly and imperfectly conceive.\*

A text of Scripture, or even the name of Christ, could scarcely ever find admission into the sermons of Mr. Taplash. In one of his fine moral harangues, descanting upon the beauties of virtue, and the excellencies of a virtuous life, he thus addressed his auditory, in a sentiment he had gathered from an heathen orator: "Virtue, though fairest of names, whose enchanting power can soothe even the savage breast! Virtue I say, couldst thou come down, dressed in human shape, and in all thy beauteous array, surely thy godlike appearance would win the foulest heart, and all the world would at once adore thee as a goddess supremely blessed, and in themselves also, not less supremely blessed, when graced with the influences of thy most tender and transporting charms. O! thou goddess, divinely glorious, descend, and let us see thy lovely features, that we may all adore!"

At once the buzz of universal applause was heard throughout the congregation, as a most grateful incense, offered up to feast the pride and vanity of the preacher, by way of return for the flattery of the same vile passions, he had so plentifully bestowed on his hearers. But soon afterwards, this very fine speech, delivered with such elegance, unfortunately met with a terrible mishap; for a gentleman of property asked Mr. Taplash to lend his pulpit to old Mr. Blunt, a worthy clergyman in that neighbourhood, which he could not well refuse, though much against the grain. He having been informed of this fine speech, quoted it almost verbatim, as it was delivered: then added, "Virtue did once descend in human form, dressed in the person of God, our holy Redeemer, and adorned in the perfection of excel-

\* Such was the fanciful nonsense that appeared in print from the pen of a very learned man, about this time, but I forbear to mention names.

lence. And did the world admire him for the beauties of holiness, or adore him for his lovely charms? Just the reverse. Was he not hated because he was lovely? And was not the cry against him, "Away with him, crucify him, crucify him?" And did they cease their vindictive cry till they had put him to death, even the ignominious death of the cross?" Never was Mr. Taplash's smelling-bottle so much needed as upon this occasion; and he used it very plentifully, while his *pretty* countenance at once reddened like the rose; nor could the auditory tell what they could think of themselves, that they could be so led away by the weak harangues of Mr. Taplash, which were so easily refuted by the sound sense of Mr. Blunt.\*

If ever Mr. Taplash appeared a little more than commonly warmed and animated, it was when he was preaching against fanatics and modern enthusiasts. On these occasions, he would be always descanting on the powers of reason, which he would dress up as another of his goddesses; that the Almighty had given her sufficient powers for the reformation of mankind; or if she should fail, conscience would be called in to lend her aid, whom he would call "the sacred monitor of the Deity---the vicegerent of the Almighty in the human bosom---the mirror of merit, from whence we receive the conscious reward of every virtuous action." Such would be some of his fulsome compliments to the corrupted heart of man, and such was the style of this wretched fribble in a cassock.

And now the reader shall be left to determine whether of the two is the more disgusting; the ignorance and vulgarity of Mr. Slopdash, or the conceitedness, pedantry, and puppyism of the genteel and elegant Mr. Taplash. Having thus presented these characters before the reader, the dialogue shall be now continued, after the departure of Mr. Lovegood.

\* What is here related actually took place at Edinburgh, not many years ago.

*Worthy.* Well Mr. Merryman, as Mr. Lovegood is withdrawn, you may speak with the more freedom. How that good man hates praise, though no person upon earth so well deserves it!

*Merryman.* Why Sir, the very style in which he mentioned his text at the visitation, struck me not a little. You know in what a grave and solemn manner he always reads the word of God. I remember the text, "Watch thou in all things; do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry." On that occasion, he wisely judged it might be most adviseable to read his sermon; though I always like him best when he preaches from the fulness of his own heart; but he knew that extempore sermons are sure to give offence to the clergy, especially in their present state. That sermon he afterwards lent me for my private perusal; and what a sermon it was! What a contrast he displayed between the carnal ministers of the world, who neither know their Lord's voice, nor seek to know it, and the spiritual and faithful ministers of the gospel, as delineated in the word of God!

*Wor.* Directly as I began to read my Bible, I was at once convinced, that the spirit and temper of real Christianity, were as opposite to the spirit of the world, as light is to darkness. And when that poor dissipated creature, Lord Rakish, gave me a call one morning, and happened to find Mr. Lovegood with me, I remember his grand objection against the Bible was, that it was impossible for *human nature* to come up to it. I well recollect Mr. Lovegood's admirable answer: "So your lordship settles the matter, not by force of argument, but from what you *feel* in yourself: the Bible must be wrong because you *feel* wrong." Immediately Lord Rakish said, "Why due you not think I should like to believe the Bible if I could, as well as yourself?" Mr. Lovegood directly answered, "Pardon me my Lord, if I deny it; you and thousands more besides, love sin too well to believe the Bible."



*Mer.* What an excellent remark ! But this was nearly the same application he made in his visitation sermon. That it was utterly impossible the carnal world could love the holiness and spirituality which existed in the real Christian ; as by the whole tenor of his conduct, he appeared a living witness against them who “ have a name to live and are dead ;” while all Christ’s real disciples “ are not of the world, for that God hath chosen them out of the world, therefore the world hateth them.” That consequently, as far as the real ministers of Christ follow the example of their holy Master, in life and doctrine, they also must suffer the reproach of the world, with their suffering Redeemer. And that therefore, his first apostles positively declared, “ that all they who live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution ;” and that “ *living godly in Christ Jesus,*” would ever draw down odium and persecution, at least of the tongue, (however, through divine providence, religion was protected by law,) where its real influences were not established in the heart ; and that we should find it so, if we made full proof of our ministry, or attended according to the directions given in the ordination office. “ To be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord ; to teach and premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord’s family ; to seek Christ’s sheep who are dispersed abroad ; and for his children, who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever :” and after he had given a large quotation from that most excellent exhortation, I well remember the contemptuous sneer that passed on that occasion, between Mr. Spiteful and old rector Guzzle.

*Wor.* No wonder at their sneers. We all know the spirit and temper of Mr. Spiteful : and as for rector Guzzle, I never heard him famed for any thing, but that he was a greater eater, and harder drinker than any man about the country. But I thought after I had read the sermon, Mr. Lovegood

was the most striking on that passage, "Do the work of an evangelist."

*Mer.* Indeed Sir, I had no conception at first, that there could be any other evangelists than the writers of the four Gospels.

*Wor.* But he gave us all to understand, that the work of an evangelist, is to spread the Gospel. And in what a full and concise manner he described the leading sentiments of the Gospel preacher !

*Mer.* I remember well his weighty observations on the importance of the ministry ; and I felt every word as against myself, for my presumption and wickedness, in taking upon me such an office, and from such motives, while I was so perfectly careless ; living like a downright heathen, and yet daring to assume the character of the minister of Christ. What strong expressions he made use of, when calculating the infinite value of but one immortal Spirit ! That "all the vast revolutions of kingdoms and empires, were but for a time ; the wide-extended splendor of the greatest of them, as once they existed, is now no more : not so the soul of the meanest individual : being of infinite duration, it is of infinite worth : " urging from this, that our doctrine should be the most pure, our example the most holy, and our diligence the most assiduous and persevering.

*Wor.* Do you recollect how he urged that part of the text, "Watch thou in all things ?"

*Mer.* Yes, I recollect enough to have convinced me, and many others, if they could have attended to it, that our careless lives, and sacred office, were the greatest contradiction to each other, and in entire opposition to the word of God, which directs us to "be instant in season, and out of season ;" to "make full proof of our ministry ;" in short "to spend and be spent for Jesus Christ ;" while at the same time, the negligence of the generality of us, was so evident and notorious. But what striking observations he made on those words, "Endure afflictions !" He at once met the objection he

supposed would be made, that this part of the text must be confined to primitive times only; and that now the profession of Christianity, since its establishment, was “attended with ease and honor.”\* But I remember with what solemnity, he asked the question, “Is the carnal mind otherwise now, than it was then,—Enmity against God? Could age cure the diseases of the human heart, which is described as being “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked?” No wonder therefore, if in every age we exemplified the justice of the charge, that we are *haters of God*; and what could be expected from such, but that they should be *haters of the godly*? I remember he further pressed the point, by first quoting the beatitudes, as in the fifth of Matthew; observing what a fine epitome it was of the mind of Christ, as it dwells in the heart of every true believer. That the real Christian was poor in spirit; and that such only are of the kingdom of heaven; that he was a holy mourner, under a sense of sin; and that such alone should be comforted; that he is found among the meek, and that these only inherit the earth, and heaven too: that they hungered and thirsted after righteousness, or rather after a holy conformity to the will of God: that he was merciful; and therefore should obtain mercy: that he was pure in heart; therefore should see God: that he was a peace-maker, and therefore should be numbered among the children of God. He then made the comparison between the high spirituality which belongs to the real disciples of Christ, and the poor cold morality so much talked of, though after all, so little practised among the people of the world.

\* An expression of the late Bishop Warburton, when in the exertion of his zeal against modern enthusiasts. Though a Bishop of a church which so repeatedly insists on divine influences, yet like many others, he entirely denied all divine influences whatever; thus he completely reduced Christianity to a system of deism, or of natural religion, as it is called, while he pretended to vindicate her sacred cause.

Then he mentioned a variety of passages of the same import, and concluded with this text: "Whatsoever ye do, in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

*Mer.* Till that hour, I never had the most distant conception what was meant by gospel holiness, any more than the horse I rode on to the visitation. But I am sure all that he spoke respecting the impurity and unholiness of mankind in general, was true, and indeed, of all as in a state of nature. I have already seen a great deal too much, though yet so young; and I have had proof enough, that what the Bible says is true, "that the whole world lieth in the wicked one." Almost all I have ever met with, have been nearly of the same stamp, following what their corrupted hearts evidently liked best; "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." I am sure all these were my delights, till I heard Mr. Lovegood.

*Wor.* But I remember, he has admirably shewed how the evangelist, or evangelical minister, had also to expatiate on the glories of the Gospel, as manifested in our redemption by the blood of Christ, our acceptance in his righteousness, and the sanctification of our natures, by the operation of the Divine Spirit. I think our excellent friend crowded too many ideas into the same subject; but no wonder, as it was most evidently his design, to take that opportunity, to give the most comprehensive view of matters in his power. What he delivered, contained sufficient substance for many a large volume.

*Mer.* I really was no critic, while he was pouring down the substance of such volumes of divinity on my poor ignorant head, and wicked heart; yet nothing astonished me so much as my ignorance, excepting my presumption, while he took the opportunity during the course of his sermon, to quote a variety of awful passages, against such a set of faithless hirelings. He produced several of them from the

34th of Ezekiel, which I never forgot from that hour to this. "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel, that feed themselves. Should not the shepherds feed the flock? The diseased have ye not strengthened. Neither have ye healed that which was sick; neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought again that which was driven away; neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them, and they were scattered because there is no shepherd, and they became meat for all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered and none did search and seek after them. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I am against the shepherds, and will require my flock at their hands, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more, for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them." I remember at the same time, he introduced another passage from the same Prophet, as belonging to the watchmen of Israel: "When I say to the wicked thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him no warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life: the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand."

*Wor.* Yes, and there is another passage, which I remember to have read in his sermon, and which he quoted from Isaiah. "His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough: and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his own gain from his quarter."

*Mer.* Yes, and how he set forth at the same time the dreadful words pronounced by our Lord, against the Scribes and Pharisees, the false teachers of the day, against all such "evil men and seducers, who are sure to wax worse and worse;" and who run



counter to the express command of God. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants, for Jesus's sake." And I well recollect what solemn countenances appeared among the laity, though afterwards he was so plentifully reprobated among some of the clergy, for having exposed them in such a manner before all the people.

*Wor.* He expose them! It had never been in the power of Mr. Lovegood, or any one else, to have exposed the clergy by such expressions, if they did not expose themselves by their improper conduct. It was however, enough to make the ears of them that heard it to tingle.

*Mer.* But the observation he made on the last clause of his text, struck me, if possible, more forcibly than any of the former. Cannot you remember Sir, what weighty remarks he made on that passage in the text, "make full proof of thy ministry;" how admirably he described the important duties of the ministerial office, and that we were commanded to "give ourselves wholly to it, that our profiting might appear unto all men." Then he asked how the man of fashion, as he is called, who was only known to be a minister by the color of his coat; the covetous and voluptuous, the negligent, and the proud, could dare to register themselves among the ministers of a crucified Redeemer. And that when it was the bounden duty of every private Christian, "to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure," and even "to work out his salvation with fear and trembling," what must the people think, when they see these ministers so much the reverse of what they themselves are commanded to be, according to the common standard of Christianity?" Then he quoted that passage from St. Peter, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his mar-

vellous light." I think I now see him as he was then in the pulpit; he stopped, and made a solemn pause, then added: "Holy brethren, such we are in office, and such we should be before God and man; what manner of persons ought we then to be, in all holy conversation and godliness," to be the leaders and instructors of a people, so sacred in themselves, and so highly devoted to God."

*Wor.* I don't remember reading that passage in the sermon; but he told me, while he was delivering it, some texts from the Scriptures struck him so forcibly, that he introduced them, and gave a short comment upon them; and this made him preach a quarter of an hour longer than he designed.

*Mer.* Yes, I heard enough of the length of his sermon, though I bless God it was not long to me. The whole of it was but just an hour. But the ridicule of almost all the clergy, both as it respected the length of his sermon, and the holy warmth with which it was delivered, shocked me exceedingly.

*Wor.* Ah Sir, had they been at a Play-house, instead of a Church, neither the length of the play, nor the pathos of the actors, would have given them the least offence. The actor is allowed to represent imaginary things as though they were real; while the minister of the truths of God, is to be stigmatized as a madman, unless he represents real things as though they were imaginary.

*Mer.* Well Sir, and I do not suppose you thought your worthy Minister to blame, in going a little beyond the limits he designed, in making some additions to the written sermon, he composed for the visitation. For though I admire the tenderness of his mind, not to give offence when it possibly can be avoided, by writing his sermon, as the truths he then delivered would be deemed sufficiently offensive among those who heard them; yet I cannot conceive why speaking extempore from the pulpit, should give more offence than at the bar, or in the senate, or in any other public assembly.

*Wor.* If indeed it be required of a minister that he should be “apt to teach,” why should we not expect at least as much from a public pleader in the cause of religion, as a public pleader at the bar? The offence therefore, taken at what is called extempore preaching, I suppose is *principally* found to be among those who are exposed thereby, for undertaking an office they are so ill qualified to fill; though I would speak with caution, as I by no means suppose, that every minister is altogether unfit for his office, who cannot speak extempore.

*Mer.* Well, I found I was in a measure obliged to commence an extempore preacher, before ever I designed it; for as soon as I became serious, none of my old sermons would do for me any longer; nor were there any to be bought that would afterwards suit my taste: and my mind was so occupied, after hearing Mr. Lovegood, that I was quite unfit to sit down to compose any thing like a regular sermon; so that having written some thoughts as they occurred to my mind, I explained them as well as I could from my notes, according to the feelings of my heart.

*Wor.* But what was the effect of the visitation sermon, after you came from church, and attended with your brethren at the dinner?

*Mer.* Sir, I was exceedingly shocked at the profane ridicule which took place against Mr. Lovegood, almost from every quarter; and some of them came up to me, supposing that I should join with them; but I was so ashamed of myself that I turned my head another way and dropped a tear; while Mr. Lovegood, Mr. Godliman, and poor old Mr. Meek, collected together in one corner of the room, to keep each other in countenance. I was heartily glad, however, to see in the midst of all his contempt, old Dr. Orderly, and Mr. Sedate his curate, come up to him, and shook him by the hand, and thanked him for his sermon. Observing, that though perhaps he could not entirely agree with him

in all points of divinity; yet that he had shewn a necessary and a well-timed zeal against the loose and improper conduct of too many of their brethren. This gave me encouragement to follow his example. And when I told him, that one of the most dissipated and negligent of the same order, begged to follow the doctor's example, in thanking him, from the bottom of my heart, for the just rebuke I had received from his lips; and prayed that God would give me grace to remember it to my dying moments, a tear began starting from my eye, which I could not suppress, while Mr. Lovegood, Mr. Godliman, and Mr. Meek had enough to do to stifle the feelings of their minds at the same time. As to Mr. Lovegood, he was much more overcome than myself: we went and stood together for a short time, by a window in the room, and very little could either of us say, while we mingled the sympathetic tear with each other, as subsisting between those who feel the joy of angels, when one poor sinner is brought to repentance unto life. A repentance which for the first time, I trust I then began to feel.

*Wor.* Had our invaluable friend preached nothing better than a sort of cold, formal, half-way sermon, he had not given half the offence, nor yet would he have done half the good: Truth can best defend itself without the assistance of our low cunning, in attempting to make it palatable to the carnal mind. But the Bishop it seems, was quite as much pleased with his sermon as Dr. Orderly.

*Mer.* I was very glad the Bishop took so much notice of him, though I heard that Rector Guzzle, and Mr. Toper, his curate, and Rector Fillpot, who sat close together, talking about nothing but good eating and drinking, afterwards did all they could to prejudice his lordship against him. It is reported when Rector Guzzle said, "You see, my lord, these modern preachers are all for grace:" the bishop replied, "It is to be lamented that the clergy, in general, have not more of that grace exhibited in their

lives and conduct, which Mr. Lovegood has so well recommended to their notice." Though I believe he also agreed with Dr. Orderly, (who is much respected by the Bishop, and by every one else who knows him,) that Mr. Lovegood rather went a little too far.

*Wor.* Well, I confess I cannot see the good of that cold moderation which some admire. When the cause is of God, we cannot be too zealous in promoting it.

*Mer.* But zeal, in such a cause, is sure to be charged as being the effect of madness. I heard of a near relation of mine, who has some preferment in Ireland, and who, but a little time ago, was quite as dissipated as myself, and is now as zealous for the cause of God, as he once was for the cause of vanity and nonsense; when he was accused by one of his "false brethren" to the bishop, as not only being mad himself, but that he had *bitten* others of the clergy also; received for answer, that if that was madness, he hoped he would go on till he had *bitten* every clergyman in his diocese.

*Wor.* I rather wonder, that a great variety of objectors did not enter the list against Mr. Lovegood's faithful testimony on this occasion.

*Mer.* Oh Sir! there was Mr. Flippant, a young stripling just in orders; but he puts me too much in mind of myself; how he went skipping and prating about the room against Mr. Lovegood's sermon. He came and asked me, among others, if I had ever heard such a *ranting fool* before? I had sufficient courage to answer: "Oh Sir! I fear the charge of being *ranting fools*, may be more justly urged against us for our wickedness, than against Mr. Lovegood for his preaching."

*Mrs. Wor.* It is of very little consequence what such empty chaps have to say: but I suppose, after this you soon became intimate with Mr. Lovegood.

*Mer.* Madam, I could not rest, as you may suppose, till I had an interview with him. Directly



therefore, as he moved from the dinner, I followed him; my heart was so full that almost every word I spoke to him was intermixed with tears of contrition and remorse: while he, with the greatest affection, began to pour into my wounded conscience all the consolatory promises of the Gospel; observing, what a great mercy it was that I was now convinced of the folly and evil of my past life, and what a blessing this might prove to hundreds besides, if by the grace of God, I continued in the same mind. When we parted, Mr. Lovegood affectionately invited me to see him. As it unfortunately happened, I was engaged on a visit to Mr. Bluster, at Revel-Hall; Mr. Lovegood advised me to send my excuse, as I could now say, I was engaged on some concerns which demanded my particular attention.—So the time I meant for Mr. Bluster, I passed with Mr. Lovegood.

*Wor.* It proved a very favourable event, that immediately as you found your need of an instructor, you at once had one at hand, so excellently well calculated for your purpose.

*Mer.* Indeed Sir it was. For you must think what a situation I was in, when just emerging from my ignorance, a mere babe in Christ, and in spiritual knowledge, I found that I had to fill the place of a Father in divine knowledge; for such fathers, I apprehend, are the only fit instructors of the children of God.\*

*Wor.* I fear there were very few who could properly be called the children of God, who needed your instruction in that parish, so that the difficulty could

\* It is probable that on this supposition the fears of Thomas Newman were excited, in Dialogue the 6th, lest Mr. Lovegood should be promoted from the vicarage of Brookfield to the Archbishoprick of Canterbury, judging very rightly how well he deserved, not only the title of the *right* reverend, but even the *most* reverend Father in God, both from the rich experience of the Gospel on his own heart, and having also so many around him, who were his spiritual children, and over whom he acted in a manner so fatherly and so wise. Oh! that a Mr. Lovegood, independent of every political principle

not be very considerable, while you had to instruct others still more ignorant than yourself.

*Mer.* True Sir. But then I was perfectly ignorant how I was to set about that *low* office of a spiritual instructor. But by passing the two days I designed for Mr. Bluster, with Mr. Lovegood, he gave me a clue for obtaining spiritual knowledge, which afterwards proved a wonderful advantage to me. He particularly advised me to read the first book of Homilies; to employ my time in modernizing the language, and then read them over as sermons, to my congregation.

*Wor.* Did you take the advice?

*Mer.* Sir, I have before told you I could think of nothing but myself, and my ignorance, directly as I began to examine myself by the new views which had been brought to my mind. And though I found the book of Homilies exceedingly instructive, and though I have loved the church of England ever since, as in this land she is certainly the pillar and ground of truth;\* yet I rather chose to follow that part of Mr. Lovegood's advice, to attempt some instructive hints, as I read the lessons appointed for the public service, and when I got into the pulpit, I have before told you how I stammered out the truth as well as I could.

*Wor.* I should suppose this change wrought on your heart, was not a greater blessing to yourself, than a matter of astonishment to all the people at Sandover.

*Mer.* I bless God, many of my parishioners were not less affected than myself, when I began to tell them all, how grieved I was that I had been leading them wrong, both by my example and doctrine; and that now I hoped in God, that I should preach them

may never be wanting to fill each vacant bishoprick in our land.

\* Mr. Merryman might not suppose from that observation, that no blemishes could be found which vindicated the conduct of others in their conscientious dissent from the established church though he laments that there are any such dissenters.

better doctrine, and shew them a better example ; and while I was thus talking to the people, it is amazing how poor Sam Resolute, one of my former comrades, was affected. I was in hopes for some time, that his heart had been truly changed ; but since then, he has awfully declined. I hope however, he will yet be brought back, for I met with him the other day, after he had been at a horse race, and begged him to come into my house. He followed me like a criminal ; I plucked up courage, and would go to prayer with him, and it is amazing how he wept, and with what contrition he mentioned his backsliding state.

*Wor.* People must have been filled with remarkable astonishment at such a change.

*Mer.* Why Sir, it was curious beyond expression, what strange reports fled about the country, concerning me. Some said, that the change was occasioned by dejection of spirits, from my having met with a heavy loss by gaming ; others found out that I had been crossed in love ; some said that I had seen my uncle's apparition, who died about six weeks before ; and others thought it was the effect of a fall from my horse, when I was taken up for dead at Gambleton races, whereby my scull had been nearly fractured, and that now I was quite gone mad. In short, it was so currently reported, that I was mad, that young captain Sparkish, one of my former frothy companions, actually came over to see me, and enquired if it might not be adviseable to consult a Physician, to know what remedy might be necessary to heal the cracked scull I met with, on the horse course.

*Miss Wor.* Why Sir, I should rather think it might have been supposed, your scull was quite as much cracked when you were after every mad amusement, and when you pitied me and my sisters

to be found, as blame Mr. Merryman and others, for their conscientious conformity to a church, notwithstanding some defects, whose liturgy is so evangelical, and whose doctrines are so sound.

at Mr. Bluster's, that we were to be bred up in such a mopish manner, as that we were not to be allowed to touch a card ; and as you expressed yourself, that my father would as soon see the devil come into the house as a dancing-master ; but I am sure, what the grace of God has done upon your heart, has been a great blessing to me.

*Mer.* Why madam, who could tell you I made such a speech as that ? I confess, though I have frequently expressed my pity that Mr. Worthy should educate his daughters in such a mopish manner, as I then thought it ; yet I do not think I ever said your father " would as soon see the devil in his house, as a dancing-master."

*Wor.* [To his daughter.] This you know my dear, was a speech of Mr. Spiteful : and when he has it in his power to exemplify the spleen of his heart against any of the supporters of vital religion, he never thinks it a crime to exaggerate.

*Miss Wor.* But Sir, since you favored me and my sisters with the present of Mrs. Hannah More's book on Female Education, we can very willingly give up the silly amusement of dancing and card playing, for the sake of the rational instructions we receive in the room of them. I am sure, when I happened to be with the Miss Giddy's the other day, I was satisfied nobody need to envy them the privileges of their sort of education.

*Mer.* Indeed, my dear Miss Worthy, through the divine blessing, I now see how much it is to be lamented, that the young women of the present day are turned out from their different boarding-schools, such mere baubles and playthings, that they scarcely deserve to be esteemed as rational creatures ; but I had no serious views of the evils of these things, till I became serious myself.

*Wor.* Yes, and when you were half a madman, and as thoughtless as you could be, you were then judged to be in your *sober* senses ; but when you became

“*sober and temperate in all things,*” then you were supposed to be a madman. We never know the worth of our own minds, till such time as we are blessed with the grace and mind of Christ.

*Mer.* I am sure the Spirit of God, in his divine operation on the human mind, may well be described as “the Spirit of wisdom and understanding.” What a lovely sedateness, what pleasant calmness, are they possessed of, who feel the restoration of “the kingdom of heaven within them;” which is beautifully described in the scripture, as being “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!”

*Wor.* Mr. Lovegood preached us two admirable sermons, a few Sundays ago, on that subject, “The peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ.”---But here is Edward coming; I suppose it is with a message from Mr. Lovegood.

*Edw.* Sir, will your honor want the best parlour when you come in? for a young gentleman and his lady in a one-horse chair, and a servant with them on horseback, stopt to read the poetry your honor had put over the door,\* and have asked for a dish of tea; and say, if I can accommodate them, they had rather stop the evening with us, than go two miles farther, to Mapleton.

*Wor.* O no Edward, we shall be going home directly.

*Edw.* But I am afraid my accommodations are not good enough for them; for I am sure by their manner that they are real *gentlefolk*.

*Mrs. Wor.* Then you will find it still more easy to accommodate them. You have all things, though in a plain way, yet very clean and neat; and if they want any thing you have not got, send to Trusty, my housekeeper, and she will let you have it.

*Wor.* Well, we will leave a couple of the largest

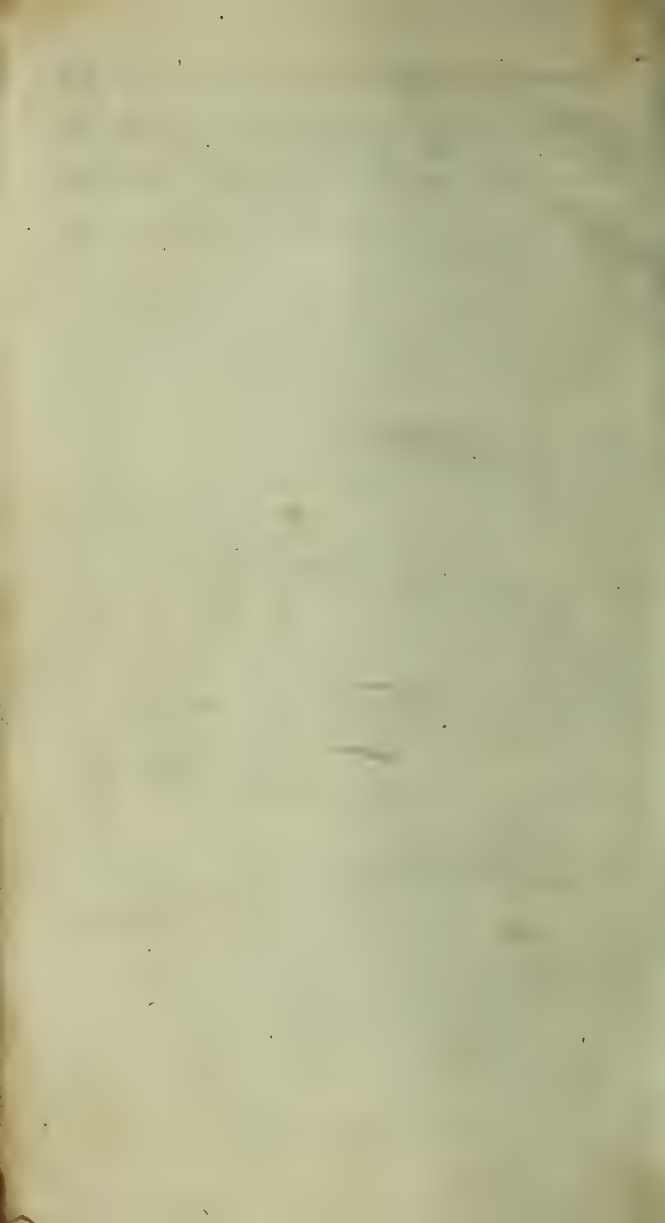


trout for your guests, and call on Mr. Lovegood ; and we will go home and clear for your visitants.

*Edw.* Thank your honor and madam, for your kindness.

*Wor.* Farewell Edward. But be sure and send if you want any thing.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

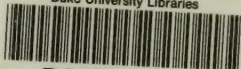




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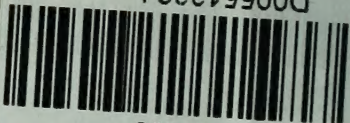
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